

THE NORTHERN WORLD ●●● BRILL

The Image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in Medieval Russia

Warrior and Saint



Mari Isoaho



THE NORTHERN WORLD ●●● BRILL

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

THE IMAGE OF ALEKSANDR NEVSKIY
IN MEDIEVAL RUSSIA

THE NORTHERN WORLD

North Europe and the Baltic c. 400-1700 AD
Peoples, Economies and Cultures

EDITORS

BARBARA CRAWFORD (St. Andrews)

DAVID KIRBY (London)

JON-VIDAR SIGURDSSON (Oslo)

INGVILD ØYE (Bergen)

RICHARD W. UNGER (Vancouver)

PRZEMYSŁAW URBANCZYK (Warsaw)

VOLUME 21



THE IMAGE OF ALEKSANDR NEVSKIY IN MEDIEVAL RUSSIA

Warrior and Saint

BY

MARI ISOAHO



BRILL
LEIDEN • BOSTON
2006

Cover illustration: Icon of St Aleksandr Nevskiy.

Despite our efforts we have not been able to trace all rights holders to some copyrighted material. The publisher welcomes communications from copyrights holders, so that the appropriate acknowledgements can be made in future editions, and to settle other permission matters.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A C.I.P. record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISSN 1569-1462
ISBN-10: 90 04 15101 X
ISBN-13: 978 90 04 15101 7

© Copyright 2006 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands
Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill Academic Publishers,
Martinus Nijhoff Publishers and VSP.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Brill provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910 Danvers MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	vii
Introduction	1

PART ONE: THE MEDIEVAL IMAGE OF THE IDEAL RULER

1. The worldly and the biblical combined in Aleksandr's battles	29
1.1. Aleksandr as a good ruler rewarded by God	29
1.2. The battle of the Neva and the medieval concept of truth	41
1.3. SS Boris and Gleb as examples of just war	53
2. The image of a defender	67
2.1. Defending the frontier	67
2.2. Defending the interests of the dynasty	78
2.3. Defending Orthodoxy	88
3. The quest for a godly ruler	103
3.1. The alleged role of Metropolitan Kirill in the writing of the <i>Life</i>	103
3.2. Eulogy of a Christian ruler	123
3.3. The claims of internal stability	138

PART TWO: CHANGING THE IMAGE

1. Adapting the image of an ideal ruler to historical consciousness	151
1.1. The historical background of Aleksandr Nevskiy's era in the Russian chronicles	151
1.2. The image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the contemporary chronicle of Novgorod	160
1.3. Consolidation of the new image in the fifteenth-century chronicles	170

2. Adapting anti-Mongol images	194
2.1. The earthly image of the military leader attached to the <i>Life of Dovmont</i>	194
2.2. The self-sacrificial image of the Second Edition of the <i>Life</i> of Aleksandr	210
2.3. The adoption of the sacrificial image of Aleksandr into the chronicles	222
3. The Kulikovo cycle and the change in historical consciousness	237
3.1. The historical setting of the chronicles—the sin and its punishment	237
3.2. Images of resistance—Dmitriy Donskoy as the second Aleksandr Nevskiy	254
3.3. Moscow's triumph over the eastern people	269

PART THREE: ALEKSANDR NEVSKIY AS THE NEW MIRACLE-WORKER OF RUSSIA

1. The image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in sixteenth-century Moscow	283
1.1. Aleksandr as a new miracle-worker for the tsars	283
1.2. Silence over the Mongol conquest reconsidered in Vasilii-Varlaam's edition of the <i>Life</i>	305
2. Ordering the imperial history of the Moscow tsars	320
2.1. The sacrificial image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the <i>Book of Degrees</i>	320
2.2. Aleksandr Nevskiy facing the western frontier	338
2.3. The edition of Iona Dumin and the concern over the imperial lineage	347
3. Epilogue: From the tool of the imperial dynasty to a national myth	363
Conclusions	380
Abbreviations	391
Bibliography	393
Index of Names	409

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is the product of an interesting period of my life. While it has undergone development through research and learning, I too have lived alongside it quite a journey, finding that both life and historical study share the same principles of searching, questioning, finding, and perhaps even developing. Both contain mistakes, but also enjoyable moments of insight and perception. The present work began with my interest in old, hidden and vanished things. The legend of Aleksandr Nevskiy was already the topic of my master's thesis, and researching and trying to understand the Russian medieval world through the chronicles led to its widening into the doctoral dissertation at hand.

I owe many people a debt of gratitude. First of all, I thank the personnel of the Department of History of the University of Oulu, and especially Professor Olavi K. Fält and Docent Kari Alenius, who have guided me on the points most important to historical study: the basic questions. Because of my disorganized way of searching and my tendency towards being at the mercy of the phenomena that arise from the sources, the ability to stay focused on the essential questions was of the greatest importance. Therefore warm and sincere thanks are in order to my abovementioned mentors for providing me with important methodological and intellectual tools. Secondly, but equally importantly, I wish to express my warmest thanks to Professor Jukka Korpela of the Department of History of the University of Joensuu, who has throughout my research encouraged me with his energetic and vivid spirit. His confidence and support has been the driving force behind my investigation, and there are no words to express the importance of this.

This work was basically done under the shelter of the Finnish Graduate School of History, which offered me the time and opportunity to dedicate myself to this study in peace for several years. The School also gave the financial support that made it possible to meet colleagues from around the world at several international conferences, and therefore special thanks are due to Dr Tapio Salminen, who at that time was a coordinator of the School. Financial support was also given by the University of Oulu, the Foundation of Emil Aaltonen, and the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

During my trips I met a lot of interesting and intelligent scholars, with whom I had a chance to discuss and exchange ideas. It is my sincere impression, that historians who research medieval people and their ways are good people, and I have truly enjoyed their company. I wish to thank each of those I had the privilege to hold discussions with, and especially Dr John Lind of the University of Southern Denmark, who has kindly commented on my work and shared with me his knowledge of Russian medieval history. Dr Sergei Bogatyrev, of the Centre for Russian Studies, School of East European Studies in London, has several times commented on my work, sharing his expertise and learning in Russian medieval history, for which I am truly grateful. I warmly thank Professor Frank Kämpfer of the University of Münster for his comments on the manuscript, and Professor Ludwig Steindorff of the University of Kiel for accepting the role of *advocatus diaboli* at the ceremony of the public defence of my thesis. Also, I sincerely thank Malcolm Hicks and Alison Duncan for their efforts in advising me on and correcting my English.

The support of my closest family has been very concrete. I thank my mother and father, Leena and Erkki Nieminen, for their assistance with linguistic problems, my mother in correcting my first presentations held in English, and my father in helping me with German material. In addition to this my father has been a dear and trusted comrade during my expeditions in old Russia, the heartlands of Novgorod, Pskov, Suzdal, Vladimir, Rostov and Moscow. Those landscapes are part of the process now being completed in the form of this book. In addition, my friends, brothers and sisters who live in the rhythms of Andalucía are given a warm embrace for sharing the balance with me. That goes also to Pirjo and Mika. This book is dedicated to my children, Ville, Miika, and Silja.

Oulu, February 2006

Mari Isoaho

INTRODUCTION

Aleksandr Nevskiy as an icon of the era

Aleksandr Nevskiy (1220/21–63) is one of the most popular figures in Russian history—a warrior and saint, a hero in defence of his country. He was already a substantial figure in his lifetime, but it was after his death that his reputation grew to truly iconic status. His fame as an ideal prince defending Russia has survived over the centuries and has embodied many of the political and religious ideals of each era. This image is mostly based on his hagiography, the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, one of the most popular medieval biographies in Russia. It created a coherent, harmonious and universally recognised image of icon-like perfection, which has decisively influenced people's impressions of Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich well into modern times.

Aleksandr Nevskiy's heroic status derives from the historical events of the 13th century. Crucial to his image as an ideal warrior was his success in blocking the eastward movement of the Teutonic Knights and his defence of the Novgorod possessions along the Gulf of Finland against the Swedes and the Finnish tribes. For this reason, Aleksandr Nevskiy is seen as a defender of the Orthodox religion of the Russian lands against the Catholic West. The defence against the western threat is considered to have reached its climax with two legendary battles in which western armies were defeated. At the battle of the Neva in 1240, Aleksandr blunted the edge of the Swedish expansion in a fight at the River Izhora, a tributary of the River Neva near the present-day city of St Petersburg. Two years later he and his troops went on to defeat the army of the Teutonic Knights at the battle of Lake Peypus, fought near the city of Pskov in 1242. Discussion of the events of 1240–2 in the national historiography of Sweden, Finland and Russia is long and variable. While Swedish historiography does not note the event in 1240, traditional Finnish and Russian historiography has given the expedition more emphasis, assigning it full-scale crusade status.¹

¹ See Donner 1929; Ramm 1959, 85–179; Vahtola, Tuomas-piispasta Birger-jaarlin 1984; Vahtola, *Finlands Kirchenpolitische Verbindungen* 1984; Shaskol'skiy 1978; Pashuto 1968.

However, some recent historians have doubted whether any large-scale western crusader movement ever took place in northern Russia at that time. More recently, the theory of a sharp division between East and West as early as the 13th century has been attributed to later additions to the sources or to twisted and exaggerated information, as reflected in the interpretations of the history of that period put forward both in the Soviet Union and in the West during the Cold War. According to newer views, the battles in question, which had earlier been considered so fateful, involving the quelling of the 'aggression of the Catholic Church', could more accurately be characterised as border skirmishes, and were of no greater significance than the many other battles fought in the border regions of Russian principalities at that time.²

The image of Aleksandr Nevskiy gained iconic status and came to represent the ideal characteristics of his epoch. As often happens in history books, some figures demand a special space as representatives of their era, and no doubt Aleksandr Nevskiy performed a fundamental role as one such marked individual. Inevitably historiography tends to raise up some figures as representatives of a whole epoch, and in this regard the figure of Aleksandr Nevskiy serves as a popular banner which people can recognise and in whom they can identify certain elements which were integral to the epoch.³ Thus there is very little personal, individual or mundane in the image of Aleksandr Yaroslavich, son of the aristocratic family which sat on the grand princely throne of Vladimir. Later, the national historiography of Russia and the Soviet Union raised him up as an ideal representative of the heroic defence of the fatherland, the liberty of Russia and the freedom of the Orthodox religion. This study does not set out, therefore, to discover a man behind the myth, but rather to identify and examine the material of which the legend was built. It is also an attempt to trace the process which caused Aleksandr Yaroslavich to rise above his contemporaries as one of the principal embodiments of the ideal prince and defender of the Russian lands, whose legend was constantly repeated in the historical narra-

² See especially Fennell 1983, 105–6, 120–1. The events on the crusade frontier in the Baltic have recently been discussed thoroughly in numerous articles by the Danish historian John Lind. Lind, 1991, 269–71; Lind 1992, 304–16; Lind, *Mobilisation* 2001. See also Korpela 1996, 211–12.

³ See Danilevskiy 2000, 13–17.

tives of medieval chronicles. This study searches for the features of the heroic image of Aleksandr Yaroslavich as a part of the historical narrative as it investigates the influence of his *Life* on the Russian medieval historical consciousness.

The Russian lands during Aleksandr's reign

As usual, it is essential for a historian of the Middle Ages to begin by defining an adequate terminology as regards nationality or state, since the modern terminology has difficulties matching the expressions and ideas that existed in the Middle Ages. Russian history is often categorised into stages by the level of formation of the state. The first state, that of early medieval Kiev, is conventionally considered to have existed from the beginning of the rule of the half-mythical *varyag* chief Rurik in Novgorod, i.e. from the year 862 onwards. The denomination 'state', however, does not do justice to the network of commercial towns populated by Slavs and ruled by an oligarchy of Scandinavian origin, descendants of Rurik. The state that we know today as Russia has nothing to do with that of the thirteenth-century entity of diverse principalities, functioning on the basis of personal and family ties, each ruled by a prince of its own. Many medievalists have ended up by referring to the medieval lands of the Rurikovichi by the overall term *Rus'* in order to make a distinction between this loose medieval political entity and the state that was built up under the Moscow tsars and formed during the reign of the Emperor Peter I as *Rossiia*, closer to what we understand as Russia today. Since the use of the term *Rus'* is not less problematic, I prefer to use the term Russia or Russian lands here, with the proviso that it is not used to describe a single state federation but a more loosely bounded entity of principalities; by preference I use the plural form, just as the medieval chronicles themselves often referred to the Russian lands.⁴

For a long time it was the prince of Kiev who occupied prime position among the Rurikovichi princes, but the prestige of that city began to weaken during the 12th century, when the attacks of southern steppe nomads frequently overran the city. From the beginning

⁴ *Russkaya zemlya*, 'the Russian land' is also the oldest and most frequently used term for the first Russian state in Kiev. See Halperin 1975, 29.

of the 12th century the Kievan prince Vladimir Monomakh began to show a keener interest in the agriculturally rich 'Land beyond the forests' (*Zalesskaya zemlya*), called Suzdal. He founded the city of Vladimir by the River Klyaz'ma in 1108, and appointed his son Yuriy Dolgorukiy as prince of Suzdal. During Yuriy's long and stable reign the principality of Vladimir-Suzdal took shape and many new towns were founded, among them Moscow. It was Yuriy's son, Andrey Bogolyubskiy, who finally decided to abandon the old grand princely city of Kiev and to have his permanent residence in Vladimir on the Klyaz'ma, although he was appointed to the seat of the great prince. Once the great princes were no longer living in Kiev, the title suffered from inflation, for after that the princes of both Kiev and Vladimir tended to use it, and the desire of a local chronicler to stress his master's influence was often reflected by using the title for a region's own princes. However, it was Yuriy Dolgorukiy's other son, Vsevolod III, who for the first time officially adopted the term great prince to his own use.⁵

At the beginning of the 13th century the Russian lands were divided into several local principalities. The possessions of the princely thrones of particular cities were tightly linked to specific branches of the Ryurikovichi family. The centres of the revival princely dynasties were Chernigov, Kiev, Smolensk, Vladimir and Galicia-Volynia. In Novgorod, the town assembly commanded an extraordinarily strong position in the city administration, but the Ryurik princes played a role in the military defence there too. As raids by the nomads of the southern steppes put pressure on the southern principalities of Kiev and Chernigov from the 12th century onwards, while Lithuania threatened the westernmost principalities from the 13th century onwards, the old trade routes changed their location, and wealth began to accumulate in the northern territories: the commercial city of Novgorod, and the cradle of wheat growing, the Vladimir-Suzdal region.

Because the raids mounted by the southern *Polovtsy* nomads did not cause trouble for the princes of Vladimir and did not ravage their cities, they were capable of building their capital city, Vladimir, on the model of Kiev, and of taking on the symbolic older brother position that had once belonged to Kiev. The enormous building

⁵ Fennell 1983, 2-4.

programme undertaken by Andrey Bogolyubskiy (1111–74), including the transfer of the cult of the Mother of God, brought prestige to the new capital of the great princes, and as Novgorod had been an important city for the sons of the great princes of Kiev, so the family of the Vladimir princely branch did what they could to achieve a position in Novgorod. The prince of Novgorod traditionally enjoyed high status, and intense rivalry existed between the princely branches of Smolensk and Vladimir in the early 13th century to place their own candidate on its throne.⁶

Although Novgorod was the only state formation of medieval Russia which was not a principality proper (i.e. one governed by the prince of a particular dynasty), it was nevertheless dependent on an extraneous prince and his army to defend its frontiers and fight its wars. Novgorod was a large trading centre, the second largest city of medieval Russia after Kiev. It was dependent on the princes of Kiev, but it is uncertain how much authority the prince actually wielded in the city administration. Early in the 12th century Novgorod's urge for independence grew and the prince's power began to erode, as the office of *posadnik*, the annually chosen 'mayor' or chief executive of the city, became elective. Although the *posadnik* had formerly been appointed by the ruling prince, he was now chosen by the town assembly (*veche*) from among the boyars of Novgorod.⁷

From 1136 onwards the prince retained only judicial power, which was rigorously circumscribed and which he had to share from that time with the *posadnik*. The townspeople of Novgorod were granted the right to invite favourably inclined or otherwise acceptable princes and to reject and expel unwanted princes as they wished. Thus the previously formalised understanding by which the oldest son of the great prince of Kiev would automatically occupy the Novgorodian throne ceased to exist.⁸ The two most influential officials in Novgorod from 1136 on were the *posadnik* and the bishop (*vladyka*). As of 1156, when Arkadiy, a native of Novgorod, was elected bishop, the Church in that city ceased to be dependent on that of Kiev, and the upgrading of the see of Novgorod to an archbishopric in 1165 was a formal recognition of the city state's power and importance.⁹ The

⁶ See Fennell 1983, 53–7; Beletskiy & Satyreva 1995, 81–5.

⁷ Fennell 1983, 17–18.

⁸ Birnbaum 1981, 44–5.

⁹ Birnbaum 1981, 46.

archbishop had an important position in the city administration, although many of the details of its administrative structure are still obscure.¹⁰

Novgorod had just reached the peak of its political, economic and cultural evolution when it faced the threat of invasion by the Mongols. While this overwhelming enemy from the steppes devastated Ryazan, Vladimir and other towns in the north-eastern parts of the Russian lands, Novgorod was saved from attack thanks to spring floods that hindered the Mongols from entering its territories. At the time of the Mongol invasion the throne of Novgorod was occupied by the young prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich, who had been installed there by his father. Aleksandr was soon called upon to defend the western borders of Novgorod, and the famous victories of 1240 and 1242 were the results of his successful military campaigns.

The information we have about the deeds of Aleksandr Yaroslavich is limited to a few sources. Since so many episodes in his life were connected with the turbulent history of the city of Novgorod, it is the chronicles of this city which provide the most detailed information on his life,¹¹ the other main chronicle source being the *Laurentian Chronicle*,¹² which describes the events of the principality of Vladimir-Suzdal. We also have two letters addressed to Aleksandr from Pope Innocent IV,¹³ which give us some information on his diplomatic contacts with the West at the beginning of the Mongol conquest, and also a brief, distorted account in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* which describes Aleksandr's battles against the Teutonic Knights in 1242.¹⁴ Finally, there is the most frequently used source when referring to his biographical information, Aleksandr's *Life*, written after his death—but when exactly, and by whom, we cannot say for sure.

From these medieval sources we can sketch Aleksandr's life and the historical situation that surrounded it. Aleksandr was the second

¹⁰ The existence of the alleged highest constitutional organ, the Council of Lords (*soviet gospod*), has recently been questioned on the basis that there are no contemporary sources referring to this institution. Jonas Granberg's analysis of sources reveals that no Russian medieval sources exist which refer to such an institution. The only German source to do so is a report by Hanseatic emissaries in 1331 which mentions 'der heren rade', which might just as well be an occasional gathering of lords rather than a regular institution. Granberg 1999, 396–401.

¹¹ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 66–84.

¹² *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 200–06.

¹³ 'Aperuit Dominus oculos tuae' in Roshko 1988; 'Pater futuri seculi', in *Historica Russiae monumenta I*, 68–9.

¹⁴ *Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2204–80.

son of Yaroslav Vsevolodovich (1191–1246), who held the town of Pereyasavl Zaleskiy and sat on the throne of Novgorod during the Mongol conquest. Yaroslav acceded to the princely throne of Vladimir after the death of his brother, Great Prince Yuriy Vsevolodovich, in 1238. There is no consensus as to the identity and background of Aleksandr's mother, who is briefly mentioned in the *Life* by her monastic name, Feodosiya. It is possible that Yaroslav Vsevolodovich married as many as three times, first to the granddaughter of the great *Polovets* warrior Kontchak, and the second time to Rostislava, a daughter of the famous Mstislav Mstislavich Udaloj ('The Daring'). Yaroslav's encounter with his celebrated father-in-law Mstislav Mstislavich is described in the famous war tale about the battle of the River Lipitsa (*Povest' o bitve na Lipitse*), which occurred in 1216.¹⁵

What the sources reveal is that the marriage with Rostislava did not last, for it is described in the chronicles how Mstislav was dissatisfied with Yaroslav's political behaviour and broke off their alliance by demanding his daughter back. Vladimir Pashuto argues that Aleksandr's mother was Yaroslav's third wife, Feodosiya Igorevna, sister of Ingvar Igorevich, prince of Ryazan.¹⁶ The exact date of Aleksandr's birth is similarly uncertain, since the chronicles do not mention it. The year of his birth is traditionally considered to be 1220, but V. Ya. Kuchkin has convincingly pointed out that it is more probable that he was born in the spring of 1221.¹⁷

Aleksandr was born in Pereyasavl Zalesskiy, the town that his father held as a personal patrimony. Yaroslav's interests were directed to the city of Novgorod, where he contested the princely power with his father-in-law Mstislav Mstislavich from 1215 onwards. Great Prince Yuriy Vsevolodovich faced troubles in consolidating the power of the Suzdalian princes of Novgorod, largely on account of the anti-Suzdalian *posadnik* of the city. After the Rostislavichi from Smolensk

¹⁵ *Povest' o bitve na Lipitse*, 114–27.

¹⁶ Pashuto 1995, 10. Begunov also believes Yaroslav married Rostislava, although there is no mention of the marriage in the chronicles. See the chronological table of the *Life* and deeds of Aleksandr in Begunov, *Letopis' zhizni* 1995, 206. However, although Mstislav Udaloj, according to chronicle accounts, took his daughter back from his insubordinate son-in-law, some scholars claim that Aleksandr's mother could still have been Rostislava. This is mostly based on the argument that the wife of Yaroslav spent most of her life with his sons in Novgorod, which is supposed to point to a personal attachment to the city where she grew up during the popular reign of her father, Mstislav Mstislavich. See Kuchkin 1995, 3–4.

¹⁷ Kuchkin 1986, 174–6; Kuchkin 1995, 5–6.

had relinquished their hegemony over the town in 1221, Novgorod was held for a while by Mikhail of Chernigov, until Yaroslav Vsevolodovich finally managed to consolidate his position in the princely seat in 1230. From then on Yaroslav and his descendants were to be the defenders of Novgorod's frontiers for the rest of the 13th century.¹⁸

Troubles soon arose from outside, however. The Mongols attacked Russia in the early winter of 1237, and the great prince of Kiev, Mikhail of Chernigov, was forced to flee to Hungary. The city of Vladimir was destroyed in the early spring of 1238, and on 4 March its prince, Yuriy Vsevolodovich, was killed in the battle of the River Sit. Most of the principalities of Russia lay devastated and defeated. It was in these circumstances that Aleksandr's father, Yaroslav, was named as great prince of Vladimir. These events had little effect on Novgorod, however. The city was too remote for the Mongols to seriously try to invade it during the spring floods, and after Yaroslav had been offered the seat of Vladimir, Aleksandr's policy in Novgorod continued along earlier lines, consisting mainly of dealings with the Lithuanian pagans and the Teutonic Knights in the western regions. Much of Novgorod's policy affected its 'twin city', the strong stone fortress of Pskov, which had a long tradition of dealing with German merchants and did not even reject the idea of joint expeditions with Germans against the Lithuanian pagans, as happened in 1236, when the Novgorodian-Pskovian forces took part in the disastrous battle of Saule, in which Lithuania decimated the joint forces of the Novgorod-Pskov army and the Brothers of the Sword.¹⁹

As the Mongol attack undermined the potential of the southern Russian principalities such as Kiev and Galicia-Volynia to mount any stronger resistance against the expansion of Lithuania, the western principalities located next to Lithuania were in serious danger. To prevent these principalities from capitulating to the Lithuanian princes, Aleksandr's family tried at first to make an alliance with the westernmost of the Russian principalities, Polotsk. The young Aleksandr married the daughter of the prince of Polotsk, Aleksandra, in 1240 in the town of Toropets, one of the key fortresses of Novgorod and Pskov against Lithuania. Little was achieved, however, and Polotsk

¹⁸ See Fennell 1983, 55–73.

¹⁹ The joint expedition of the Russians and the Brothers of the Sword against the Lithuanians is described in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, *Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 1859–1958.

inevitably fell into the hands of the Lithuanian rulers within a few decades. Pressure on the western borderlands of Novgorod continued as the Swedes reached the River Neva in July 1240. Noble sons of aristocrats did not delay in their mission to conduct war expeditions and to assume a leading position in their society, and consequently Aleksandr was only 19 or 20 years old when he achieved his celebrated military victory over the Swedes on the banks of the Neva. It has been a much-speculated question whether the Swedes were acting in cooperation with the Teutonic Knights and whether the expedition constituted a large-scale crusade or not. The only contemporary source regarding the expedition, apart from the *Life* of Aleksandr, is the *Novgorod I Chronicle*.²⁰

Once the Swedes had been successfully defeated at the Neva, Pskov became the centre of a dynastic struggle between the Mstislavichi of Smolensk and Vsevolodovichi of Vladimir. The city was held by the princely branch of Smolensk, which had established good relationships with German merchants and with the archbishop of Riga.²¹ In late summer 1240 the Teutonic Knights took the stronghold of Izborsk near Pskov and also succeeded in entering Pskov. On this occasion the population of Pskov was already divided into defenders of the city, led by the military commander nominated by Aleksandr, and supporters of the Germans, led by the *posadnik*, Tverdilo Ivankovich. At the same time as the knights took Pskov, German support was also high in Novgorod. It was in all likelihood for this reason that Prince Aleksandr was expelled from the city in the early winter of 1240, only a few months after his victory at the Neva.²²

In 1241 the anti-German branch of the Novgorod citizens pleaded for Prince Aleksandr to return to defend the city, which he later did. Aleksandr managed both to capture the fortress of Kopor'e, which the Germans had built in the vicinity of Novgorod some 16 km from the Gulf of Finland, and to retake the city of Pskov during

²⁰ The latest view of the joint Swedish-German activity has been argued by Vahtola, Tuomas-piispasta Birger-jaarlin 1984; Vahtola, Finlands Kirchenpolitische Verbindungen 1984. Vahtola's views have been criticised by John Lind, who has doubted the originality of the information on the events of 1240 in the oldest version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*. See Lind, 1991. His sceptical approach has been shown to be erroneous in many ways by a number of scholars, however. The *Novgorod I Chronicle's* account of the battle at the Neva is discussed in more detail in Part Two, Chapter 1.1.

²¹ Beletskiy & Satyreva 1995, 81–5; Selart 2001, 151–76.

²² *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 78.

the spring of 1242. As an act of retaliation, Aleksandr, assisted by his younger brother Andrey, left to raid the lands of the Estonians. As they were returning from their plundering expedition, the brothers confronted the combined army of the Estonians and the Teutonic Knights on the ice of Lake Peypus, in a battle that later came to be known as the Battle on the Ice and which formed the second landmark in the formation of Aleksandr's image as a great warrior and defender of the Russian lands. Here, as in the Neva battle, we have accounts in the *Novgorod I Chronicle* and in the *Life*, but we also have the opponents' viewpoint in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*.

Aleksandr's successful early career as prince of Novgorod formed the basis for his later fame as an ideal warrior. The *Life* is not restricted to describing his glorious victories on the battlefield in defence of Novgorod, however, but concerns itself ultimately with larger contexts such as East-West diplomacy, as described in his confrontations with the pope and the Mongol khan. He became one of the most venerated and best remembered princes of medieval Russia, depicting a mixture of devout humility in his relations with the Golden Horde and the Mongol conquerors and glorious military resistance in his actions on the Novgorodian western borders.

Methods

This study is dedicated to examining the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in medieval Russia. It is not so much what he actually accomplished but the idealized image presented in his hagiographic *Life* that made Aleksandr one of the best-loved medieval princes. This image, not Aleksandr himself, is the primary object of the present study. The *Life* is treated as the main historical narrative which influenced conceptions both of Aleksandr as a ruler and of Russian history. History writing has an enormous role in the development of the popular images of nationalities, states and wars. It is exactly this kind of public image which survives in a more or less permanent form, and is handed down from generation to generation. The public image is always linked to the consciousness of the whole society. Written history is always something more than mere innocent storytelling, because it was the primary vehicle for the distribution and use of power.²³

²³ See Munslow 1997.

Nations tend to be more or less creations of their historians, and the image of the past often gives rise to both the image of the present and the image of the future.²⁴ As the *Life* was regarded by medieval people as a part of their written history, a study of it and its development during the Middle Ages is also a study of conceptions of history. Therefore this book attempts to look beyond the person of Aleksandr Yaroslavich himself, using historical image research as its leading method.

As Aleksandr Nevskiy has been distinguished as an ideal prince, one of the most popular icons of the epoch, it is obvious that it is specifically this image that has significantly influenced our perceptions of him. Images also influenced the perceptions of medieval men. One may say that the language and mind of the medieval man was that of pictorial images mixed into a cohesive system of symbols, colours and meanings. Social strata, the rich and the poor, were distinguishable from each other outwardly by a clear contrast in clothing. Jewellery and bright colours shone in the fashionable dress of the aristocracy and wealthy citizens, whereas the poor tramped about in their grey attire. Public social life was governed by ceremonies and symbols, and the Middle Ages as a whole has often been seen as a period of contrasts, dark and light, in which religion, world views and philosophy were in many ways tied to forms of pictorial expression. In addition, the boundaries of faith and imagery became confused at this time, as human salvation was directly linked to the iconographic symbol system.²⁵

The medieval world of the non-visible, death, life, fortune, holiness, etc., was given concrete expression through allegorical pictures, miniature paintings, statues and icons. The religious world was symbolised with the help of allegories, which, for their part, were signified by the numerous saints with their special characteristics. The entire content of intellectual life found an outlet in visual, pictorial form. The religious conscience of the multitude had no need for intellectual proofs in matters of faith. The symbolic representations of icons, statues and hagiographic narratives became articles of faith in the most direct manner, passing straight from images to convictions,

²⁴ Boulding 1973, 64–114.

²⁵ An excellent analysis of the images of medieval religious art in the 12th–14th centuries is given by Camille 1989. See also the extensive works of Gerhard B. Ladner, collected in Ladner 1983.

taking root in the mind in the form of clearly outlined and vividly coloured pictures.²⁶ Icons, statues and miniature paintings were also in a way unavoidably re-transmitted to the abstract conceptual world. In other words, the abstract and physical worlds had equal shares in the same symbol system, which was concretely expressed through art. The allegorical images were mental instruments designed to help people control a chaotic world. The function of the saints was to reassure and organise the mental world by virtue of their familiar figures.²⁷

Medieval hagiographies were sacred stories designed to teach the faithful to imitate actions which the community considered to be exemplary.²⁸ It has been said that these descriptions not only reveal the values of their individual writers, but also the collective awareness of history, values and ideals within the entire community. The individual writer of a medieval saint's life can be characterised as an anonymous person whose memory goes back for generations. Thus the lives of the saints do not describe independent individuals as much as the religious community's own opinions of higher ideals, piety, morals and values. Consequently, the hagiographic descriptions can be regarded as a part of society's collective realisation of its own era and its own set of values.²⁹

Thomas J. Heffernan emphasises the significance of hagiographies for research into the medieval psyche, arguing that they reflect exactly what Braudel has described as the *longue durée*. Although the narration of the hagiographies is stereotyped, they express interaction between the writer and the community, and as they were written for cult purposes, they reflect values acknowledged as correct in society and promote social uniformity. Hence the dramatic moments, no matter how individual and heroic they might appear to be, are conventionalised and exist as paradigms for their community.³⁰ As the lives of the saints described in their own way the social needs of the society that made up their audience, the norms of the hagiographies changed with time, like those of the societies themselves.

²⁶ Huizinga (1924) 1970, 148.

²⁷ Huizinga (1924) 1970, 151.

²⁸ Heffernan 1988, 5.

²⁹ The existence of a collective concept and perception of the images of the saints has received the unreserved approval of numerous medievalists. See for example Delehaye 1921, 438; Gurevich (1988) 1990, 49–50; Granger & Ripperger 1987, x.

³⁰ Heffernan 1988, 17–20.

According to Heffernan, 'it is reasonable to assume that our hypothetical biographer has an understanding of the community's expectation concerning the figure whose life he is about to compose.'³¹ From this point of view, society is the writer of the hagiography and the voice of the storyteller is a collective one.

The primary purpose of the life of a saint was to educate and give guidance. Teaching of the truth of the faith through individual examples was directed above all at the satisfaction of social needs. For this reason, embellishment of the content of the text was kept to a minimum so that it would not disturb the clarity of the teaching. Another educational characteristic of the hagiographies was the importance of the whole entity, and consequently a knowledge of the details formed a supporting structure for this entity, the salvation drama taking place in the world. Information on the saint's life was carefully selected and presented appropriately and understandably in a way that would help to transmit a message of Christian virtues.³² Fundamentally, hagiography was about spiritual salvation. Maintaining the coherence of the narrative content was important because it provided a framework that supported the ideological unity connecting earthly matters with spiritual beliefs. To use the hagiographies as a source of detailed information about medieval life can thus be misleading, because this information was selected—or in many cases obviously invented—to convey the underlying message in a clear and appropriate fashion.³³ The easiest way to make the message intelligible was to use already well-known stories.³⁴

When reading hagiographies one has to remember that the perception of the 'real world' in the Middle Ages was quite different from what we would today understand as reality, because it was harmonious, hierarchical and defined. Having a clearly defined sense of what constituted 'reality' meant that a generally accepted standard language of expression was used when describing reality in the medieval world—the language of clichés. It thus becomes quite clear that the lives of the saints, expressed with the help of these clichés, are stereotypical and impersonal.³⁵ It is this that makes the

³¹ Heffernan 1988, 19–22.

³² See Korpela, *Nestorin kronikka* 1995, 218.

³³ Korpela, Vladimirin P. Jumalanäidin 1995, 24, 30; Korpela, *Konstantinuksen lahjakirja* 1995, 58–66.

³⁴ See Siikala 1984, 23.

³⁵ See Korpela, Vladimirin P. Jumalanäidin 1995, 24; Heffernan 1988, *passim*.

hagiographies so appropriate as subjects for image research: the images presented in them are exactly the kind of simplified models of reality that image research sets out to examine.³⁶

Image research offers a fruitful approach to the examination of groups of hagiographic sources, due to its nature as an embodiment of collective and social needs. An image is commonly understood as a concept created in the human mind when the information received about a certain topic becomes part of one's general concept of the world. In addition to plain knowledge, an image also includes opinions, attitudes and beliefs. As knowledge has an implication of truth, the image is more about what the person believes to be true.³⁷ An image differs from an attitude in that it usually persists for a long time, changes slowly and is commonly simple.³⁸ These characteristics fit well with the nature of medieval hagiographic descriptions. The hagiographic source material offers an opportunity to examine these medieval images, because their collective demands are based on the undercurrents of the slowly changing world view through which the term 'image' of historical image research is also defined. The image offered by a saint's life is at the same time a simplified model of reality.³⁹

The traditional approach to the critical study of historical documents has been to determine how much real and reliable factual information is included in them. Medieval hagiographic source material was for a long time regarded as useless due to its manipulative and empirically unreliable nature, and it was only in the second half of the 20th century that researchers again became interested in such material. These days one does not look for factual information about the lives of saints, but strives to study the principles of medieval literature and people's ways of thinking in the past.⁴⁰ Image research offers a useful approach specifically for this kind of study of medieval sources.

The medieval writer has often been compared to an icon painter. It was customary for several masters to be involved in the production of an icon. Even after the icon was finished it would be retouched

³⁶ See Fält 1997, 63.

³⁷ Boulding 1973, 5–6; Alenius 1996, 11–12.

³⁸ Boulding 1973, 8; Fält 1982, 10; Fält 1997, 62–3.

³⁹ Compare Fält 1997, 63.

⁴⁰ Heffernan 1988, 17, 54; Lehmijoki 1997, 226–7; Lehmijoki-Gardner 1999, 20–5.

and repainted with colours and styles appropriate to the new ideals of each era. Icons were not signed, for they did not represent a specimen of the skill of the painter, but symbolised divinity on earth. The function of icons was to embody a divine revelation, which copyists preserved and cherished according to the norms and ideals of each era.⁴¹ Hagiographic literature bears fundamental similarities to the icon painting tradition described above, as the texts could be modified by a copyist, taking advantage of the prevailing literary standards of his own time. In other words, the medieval source does not necessarily give a precise picture of the ideas and language of the epoch of the original text, but it can tell us a lot about the norms and language of the era represented by the person who made the copy.⁴² The anonymity of the medieval writer was customary, although formal references to the writer might still exist, as seen in many *topoi* of historical writing. In addition, the reading of a text was often a performance, most often a social occasion. Therefore, it is essential to distinguish that not only writing, but also reading, was not a largely private occasion as it is today.⁴³

Although medieval writers felt free to edit texts, they were aware of different approaches in making a book. The thirteenth-century Italian Franciscan scholar Bonaventure (1221–74) distinguished four ways of making a book (*modus faciendi librum*): ‘There are four ways of making a book. Sometimes a man writes others’ words, adding nothing and changing nothing; and he is simply called a scribe (*scriptor*). Sometimes a man writes others’ words, putting together passages which are not his own; and he is called a compiler (*compilator*). Sometimes a man writes both others’ words and his own, but with the others’ words in prime place and his own added only for purposes of clarification; and he is called not an author but a commentator (*commentator*). Sometimes a man writes both his own words and others’, but with his own in prime place and others’ added only for purposes of confirmation; and he should be called an author (*auctor*).’⁴⁴

When analysing political relations between East and West in the 13th century, historians have used the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* as one

⁴¹ Uspenskiy 1987, 58; see also Likhachev 1969, 16.

⁴² Uspenskiy 1987, 56–7.

⁴³ Burrow 1982, 30–6, 47.

⁴⁴ Cited from Burrow 1982, 29–30.

of the most important sources, other source materials being very scarce. The problem has usually been that the *Life* is used as if it were a single source telling us about Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich, whereas in reality there are several medieval variants of his hagiography, which can be divided into *editions* in view of their differences in content; because of its popularity, many *copies* were made of each edition, which can be classified as slightly different *versions*. Thus, when referring to the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, historians have often failed to cite the specific hagiographic edition or version they have used, and have failed to take into account the importance of the date of each source.⁴⁵ One of the main tasks of this study is therefore to examine whether the ideas of different eras are reflected in the copies and editions of Aleksandr Nevskiy's *Life*, and if they are, to study the changes in the image presented and the values of each era in which a new copy or edition was produced. In this way the different editions and versions of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* provide this study with the methodological equipment to examine the ideas typical of each era, and enable us to examine how these ideas modified his saintly image.

*The Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the research
and the aims of this study*

Using hagiographies as historical sources has its own historiography in Russian scholarly tradition. They were an object of wide interest at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, but no specific methodological treatment for this genre of literature had yet been fully developed, as the delicate analysis which seeks carefully to reveal the historical layers beneath the surface of the hagiographic material remained unrealised. Ever since V. O. Klyuchevskiy's *Drevnerusskie zhitiya svyatykh kak istoricheskii istochnik* (1871), the treatment of hagiographic works has followed a pattern that has been focused merely on revealing the historical 'truth' contained in the story, and thus the aesthetic character of the hagiographies has remained secondary. In Klyuchevskiy's approach, form became a negative element, while the value of the hagiographies was represented by historical facts,

⁴⁵ See for example Karamzin 1842, vol. 4, 15–57; Vernadsky 1966; Pashuto 1995.

their core of reality.⁴⁶ It was Klyuchevskiy, however, who for the first time made an effort to make a distinction between the different editions of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, by naming the oldest edition as the 'First Edition' (*Pervonachal'naya redaktsiya*).⁴⁷

One of the great reformers of our understanding of Russian medieval literature as historical sources has been Academician Dmitriy S. Likhachev, whose extensive works penetrate to the essence of medieval literary description. It was he who created the concept of style in medieval literature, which enabled him to conceptualise the stylistic conventions of each epoch, so that those of the different genres of literature became subordinate factors in the representation of reality. Style in this sense determined not only the forms of literature, but those of the visual arts as well.⁴⁸ It is important to focus on one essential rule when reading medieval lives of the saints, as Jostein Børtnes so delicately puts it: 'It becomes therefore a main task for hagiographical research to study the interplay between the author's own narrative and his borrowings from other texts, between narration and quotation.'⁴⁹

The present study attempts to seek out the origins and development of the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy, and it thus becomes essential to realise the main principles of the medieval literary tradition.⁵⁰ This highlights the gravity of the genre and the etiquette of medieval literature. As Likhachev formulated it, 'the art of the Middle Ages was that of an emblem.'⁵¹ Form was essential, and the medieval author adopted, in Likhachev's view, the role of a master of ceremonies who did not describe life but transformed it into a solemn ceremony in which the reader or listener could take part.⁵²

The *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* is extant in several manuscripts from the 14th century onwards, and the history of its development through different editions has still not been resolved satisfyingly. The history

⁴⁶ Klyuchevskiy 1871, 358, 438. Klyuchevskiy's book was later reprinted by the publisher Nauka in Moscow 1988. Jostein Børtnes has written an excellent summary of the Russian tradition of researching hagiographies in his *Visions of Glory*. See Børtnes 1988, 16–26.

⁴⁷ Klyuchevskiy 1871, 65–7.

⁴⁸ Likhachev 1970, 4; Likhachev 1973, 11 f.

⁴⁹ Børtnes 1988, 25.

⁵⁰ On medieval literature in Europe, see especially Auerbach 1967; Curtius 1953; Lewis 1966; Eco 1986.

⁵¹ Likhachev 1967, 60.

⁵² Likhachev 1967, 98.

of the earliest version is especially problematic, since the extant texts carry fairly late dates.⁵³ Although there exists the problem of extant and non-extant texts, at the same time it is the fact that the *Life* has been preserved in so many versions from different eras, deviating in content from each other to some extent, that makes it possible to study the development of the image of the ideal prince, Aleksandr Nevskiy.

Although the *Life* changed its form and was later edited many times, the oldest edition survived amazingly well, and most of the preserved copies of the First Edition date from the 16th century. The *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in its First Edition (*Pervonachal'naya redaktsiya*) was first published in 1882 by Archmandrite Leonid, who edited a sixteenth-century manuscript of the *Life*.⁵⁴ The same manuscript was also published by the Finnish historian Vilho Mansikka in his *Zhitiie Aleksandra Nevskogo* in 1913, along with four later editions—the Second Edition (*Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*), the Vladimirian Edition (*Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*) which is also called the Panegyric (*Slovo Pokhval'noe*), the edition of Vasilii-Varlaam (*Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*), and the edition of Iona Dumin (*Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*). In addition he published a fifteenth-century manuscript that he had found in the library of N. P. Likhachev which was very similar to the *Life* of Aleksandr presented in the *Sophia I Chronicle*, referring to this as Likhachev's Edition (*Likhachevskaya redaktsiya*). Thus the historical development of the narrative of the *Life* was fully opened for public debate.

In his work Mansikka summarized the most characteristic changes that each new edition witnessed, but although he showed interest in the historical development of the narrative of the different editions of the *Life*, he did not enter into any discussion of the reasons or motives behind the changes. Mansikka demonstrated how closely the First Edition of the *Life* was tied to its literary models, and pointed to the dominant influence of Biblical descriptions of the Old Testament kings of Israel and of classical war tales such as Flavius's *De bello judaico* and the Pseudo-Callisthenes's *Alexandria*.

Soon after Mansikka published his study of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* the eminent work of N. Serebryanskiy, *Drevne-russkiya knyazheskiya zhitiya*, was published in 1915. Serebryanskiy dealt more widely

⁵³ Likhachev noted in 1947 that the history of the origins of the *Life* was unresolved. This was restated by Okhotnikova 1987 and Koluchchi 1997, 252–60.

⁵⁴ Leonid 1882.

with the whole range of medieval Russian princely panegyrics and was able to make some additions to Mansikka's examination of the *Life*. In the literary patterns of the First Edition of the *Life* he highlighted the influence of the Byzantine war tale of Digenes Akrites, known in Russia by the name *Devgenievo deyaniya*. Even though he criticised Mansikka's way of dealing only with literary patterns, without considering artistic wholeness or the demands of the Church, Serebryanskiy actually had little to say about the historical significance of the various editions.

The next time the *Life* was thoroughly examined was in 1965, when Yuriy Begunov published his work *Pamyatnik russkoy literatury XIII veka. "Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli"*. The intention of his study was to clarify the *Life*'s relationship to the medieval Russian lyrical *Tale of the Destruction of the Russian Land* (*Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli*), since the fragment of the *Slovo* had survived only in two manuscript collections (another piece of the *Slovo* was dated to the 15th and another to the 16th century) attached to the *Life* of Aleksandr, as if it were some kind of prologue to it. In order to provide a full treatment of the relationship between these two medieval literary fragments, Begunov considered it necessary first to study properly the First Edition of the *Life*, which has survived in 13 manuscripts altogether, dating from the 1377 *Laurentian Chronicle* fragment to several manuscripts of the 17th century.⁵⁵ As for its relationship to the *Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli*, Begunov concluded that they were two independent works which had been incorporated together in Pskov some time between the 1450s and the 1480s.⁵⁶

Begunov was not satisfied with the way that scholars had agreed the sixteenth-century manuscript of the *Life* (from the collection of Moscow Religious Academy, published in 1882 by Archmandrite Leonid and later by others) to be what they considered as the oldest version of the *Life*.⁵⁷ On the basis of the 13 surviving manuscripts of the First Edition of the *Life*, Begunov prepared a reconstruction of what he considered to be the original version of the First Edition, using what he called a 'textual method' as his work tool.⁵⁸ It is

⁵⁵ The dates and origins of all 13 manuscripts have been given in Begunov 1965, 16–17.

⁵⁶ Begunov 1965, 81.

⁵⁷ Begunov 1965, 12.

⁵⁸ Begunov also called the First Edition *Pervaya redaktsiya*. His reconstruction of the First Edition of Aleksandr's *Life* is largely accepted by leading authorities of

Begunov's reconstruction of the First Edition of the *Life* that has been used as the main source in this study.

Although Begunov's work gained wide recognition, in 1981 Okhotnikova prepared a slightly different version of the First Edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* for a publication series of medieval Russian texts entitled *Pamyatniki literatury Drevney Rusi*. Like Begunov, Okhotnikova also took the *Life* presented in the *Pskov II Chronicle* as her basis, but the difference between these two textual studies was that Okhotnikova made fewer changes to the *Pskov II Chronicle* narration.⁵⁹

In his search for the origins of the First Edition, Begunov's ultimate conclusion was that the *Life* had first been written at the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir in 1282–3, during the last period of the reign of Aleksandr Nevskiy's son, Dmitriy Aleksandrovich.⁶⁰ This conclusion followed an article by Likhachev, published in 1947, in which he pointed to Metropolitan Kirill as the man who introduced the literary patterns into the *Life*, on the basis of a comparison between it and the details given in the princely chronicle of Daniil. Allegedly Kirill moved from Galicia to Vladimir in the 1250s, and thus he fitted in well with the transition in southern Russian literary descriptions in Likhachev's schema.⁶¹

The dualism in the nature of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, which combines an earthly war story with the hagiography of an ideal Christian ruler, is its most striking feature. The full title in itself, *Stories of the life and bravery of the Orthodox and Great Prince Aleksandr (Povesti o zhitii i o khrabrosti blagovernago i velikago knyazya Oleksandra)*⁶² reveals that the narrative is a combination of two literary genres; a war tale, *povest'*, and hagiography, *zhitie*. The *Life* had an enormous influence on medieval Russian conceptions of bravery and the image of the ideal ruler described as an elaborate complexity.

The first part of this study penetrates to the core of the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy given in the First Edition of his *Life*, in order to

medieval Russian literature in the West, among others John Fennell. See Fennell & Stokes 1974, 108.

⁵⁹ *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo*, 426–39; cf. Okhotnikova 1981, 603.

⁶⁰ Begunov 1965, 57–61.

⁶¹ Likhachev 1947.

⁶² *Povesti o zhitii o khrabrosti blagovernago i velikago knyazya Oleksandra* (hereafter as *Povesti o zhitii*), 187.

determine its significance in a medieval Russian context. Since the main concern is what kind of historical source the *Life* is, it is examined as a historical narrative. Realising that it is simultaneously a hagiographic life of a saint and a princely eulogy, the patterns that governed medieval ways of writing are taken into account. Here the use of literary and biblical parallels will be of great importance, and medieval symbolism and its need of hierarchy, literary *formulae* and *topoi* are examined in order to ascertain how these were made use of in shaping the image of Aleksandr. The three important northern cities of the medieval Russian lands, Novgorod, Pskov and Vladimir, obviously have their share in the narrative, and this study seeks to find out the readership to whom the *Life* was directed and the purposes for which it was created. As in the case of princely eulogies in general, these matters are closely bound up with dynastic claims. This study demonstrates the weaknesses of the hypothetical theories concerning the authorship of the *Life* and makes a statement on these.

Knowledge of the complexity of the *Life* and the uncertainty of its dating has had surprisingly little effect on historiography concerning the history writing of the 13th century. Due to the scarcity of medieval source material, historians have entered amazingly little into discussion of how the genre of the *Life* affected its historical accuracy. It was only the Oxford professor John Fennell, in his *The Crisis of Medieval Russia, 1200–1304* (published in 1983), who brought up the question of how overestimated most evaluations of the battles at the Neva in 1240 and on the ice of Lake Peypus in 1242 had been, since historians have been only too eager to accept the hagiographic information and have neglected the fact that it was written for a certain purpose. Fennell, however, accepted the arguments of Likhachev and Begunov that Metropolitan Kirill was the prime agent ultimately responsible for the writing of the *Life*. As he saw it, Kirill's intentions lay in his anti-Catholic background, and therefore the overtone of the hagiography was directed against western Catholic enemies.⁶³ Fennell's opinions soon reached Russian scholars, who nevertheless remained convinced that, although the numbers of participants in the legendary battles against the western intruders may have been overestimated, the historical significance of Aleksandr's

⁶³ Fennell 1983, 103–6.

military skill on Novgorod's western front was not diminished.⁶⁴

Like images of national heroes in general, that of Aleksandr Nevskiy has touched so deeply the basic ideas of Russian national identity, reflecting its views of not only the past, but also of the present and the future, that it has survived static and unchangeable throughout centuries, outliving and triumphing over all the contradictory historical facts.^{64a} This study seeks to penetrate to the basics of the image, its origin and the long history of the manifestations of Aleksandr's image during the Middle Ages. It also touches on many of the hypotheses and theories developed to back up the historical role of Prince Aleksandr, presented in the national historiography of Russia and the Soviet Union.

The present work is a critical study of the sources that built up the static image of the ideal warrior. The hagiographic *Life* is of fundamental significance in shaping the image of an ideal warrior and venerated prince. Other traces of the image are in the medieval Russian chronicles. Both of these source groups affected each other. Once the *Life* was written, it soon appeared in the chronicles, at first as an individual text inserted into them. The oldest extant text—although it survived only fragmentarily as the chronicle lacks several pages just after the description of the Neva battle—is in the *Laurentian Chronicle*, a manuscript dated to 1377. It is placed in the year 6771 (1263), the year of Aleksandr's death, where it serves as a eulogy to the venerated ruler.⁶⁵

In that year the Great Prince Aleksandr, son of Yaroslav, died. We will tell you about his manliness and the story of his life. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I, poor and sinful, who am not capable of writing, begin to write of the life of the Great Prince Aleksandr, son of Yaroslav, grandson of Vsevolod . . .⁶⁶

Shlyapkin argued in 1915 that the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was written for the first time in 1377, by the monk Lavrentiy, who added it to his chronicle, written for the requirements of Prince Dmitriy Konstantinovich of Suzdal. This manuscript, later named the *Laurentian Chronicle* after him, was deposited in the nucleus of the cult of

⁶⁴ Kirpichnikov, *Dve velikikh bitvy* 1996, 29–41; Kirpichnikov, *Aleksandr Nevskiy* 1996; Shishov 1995, 31–7.

^{64a} Frithjof Benjamin Schenk has made a thorough investigation of the memory of Aleksandr Nevskiy in Russian cultural thinking all the way into the present day. See Schenk 2004.

⁶⁵ *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 204–6.

⁶⁶ *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 204.

Aleksandr, the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir where Aleksandr was buried. Shlyapkin argued that it was very likely that Lavrentiy himself was a monk of the monastery in question.⁶⁷ Serebryanskiy similarly concluded that Lavrentiy inserted the *Life* into his chronicle,⁶⁸ an opinion which was later also supported by Begunov.⁶⁹

The Pskov chronicles likewise included the *Life* as an independent tale, but they differ from the *Laurentian Chronicle* in the context in which it is included, for the chronicle tradition began relatively late in Pskov, in the 14th century,⁷⁰ and there are only a few occasional statements referring to the era of Aleksandr in the main chronicle text. Thus it lacks a proper place in the actual chronicle, and is instead dealt with independently, together with the life of Pskov's own hero, Prince Dovmont,⁷¹ who had a long and successful career as prince of Pskov at the end of the 13th century. The *Life of Dovmont* is written in imitation of that of Aleksandr, and both are presented at the beginning of the *Pskov II Chronicle*, before the actual yearly chronicle entries begin.⁷² Since the medieval literary tradition was based on the copying of old texts, it was possible for a text to live a life of its own, and just as the chronicles were constantly being rewritten and edited, the *Life* also underwent many changes. The versions presented in the Laurentian and Pskov chronicles represent its oldest form, the First Edition.

One should note right away that Aleksandr's hagiography has not been properly classified at all, for the two people who have dealt with the later editions of the *Life* are not even speaking in the same terms. There are considerable differences of opinion as to how the numerous editions and versions should be quantified, labelled and classified, so that Begunov, for instance, counted more than twenty editions of the *Life*, reaching all the way into the 18th century, whereas Okhotnikova reports the number of editions to be only nine.⁷³

⁶⁷ Shlyapkin 1915, 4–5.

⁶⁸ Serebryanskiy 1915, 177.

⁶⁹ Begunov, *Kogda Zhitie* 1971, 111–20; Begunov, *Russkie istochniki* 1995, 55.

⁷⁰ Grabmüller 1975, 102–67.

⁷¹ The name of the Lithuanian prince Daumantas was transliterated into Russian as Dovmont. In addition to his pagan Lithuanian name, he also received a Christian name, Timofey, when he was baptised after becoming prince of Pskov.

⁷² *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 11–18.

⁷³ Begunov, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo v Russkoi literature* 1995, 355.

Apart from Begunov's reconstruction of the First Edition, the development of the image of Aleksandr Yaroslavich is examined in this study using the printed editions of the *Life* published by Mansikka in 1913, and by using the medieval chronicle adaptations of the *Life*. In the second part, the historical context of the hagiography is introduced into the discussion. This is done by examining the basic historical information and its adaptation in the Russian chronicles—the history of Christianity and of Russia's role in it. The discussion then turns to Aleksandr's role in this great drama of salvation as mediated through his *Life*. Since the historical narrative was created, the main question is, how was it adopted? Did it influence other historical narratives or, *vice versa*, did other historical narratives have an influence on the content of the *Life*? Did the *Life* itself change and, if so, how? The historical and eschatological interpretation of the most important fifteenth-century Russian chronicles, especially the *Sophia I Chronicle*, and their views of historical events in the world and in Russia will be examined. This part of the study deals largely with historical consciousness, the ideas which commonly affected the whole understanding of history and the role which an ideal prince played in this.

Thus the present study evaluates the image of Aleksandr as it was modified over time in order to coincide with the ideals of each period in which it was rewritten, and by means of historical image research it penetrates into the changes in the perceived portrait of Aleksandr Nevskiy as given in the hagiographic *Life*. Ultimately the study will question how the changes in the hagiographic image of Prince Aleksandr were connected with the growth of the identity of the emerging principality of Moscow. The historical representation of the image of Aleksandr is dealt with by examining the Second Edition of the *Life* and the different adaptations that it made to the heroic image. The study also examines the important influence of the image of Aleksandr as given in the new chronicle editions on other historical narratives, such as that of Dmitriy Donskoy, which nurtured another popular image of a warrior prince.

Finally, in the third and last part, the study penetrates the image of Prince Aleksandr in the era of Metropolitan Makariy and Ivan IV, the culmination point of the medieval consciousness of Russian history and its princes, which witnessed a great cultural revival and growth in historical consciousness which was perpetuated in the great literary achievements of Moscow. Aleksandr Nevskiy was canonised

in 1547, and for the purpose of his officially achieved cult status his *Life* was rewritten several times. While still Archbishop of Novgorod, Makariy had begun the writing of a *Great Menology* (*Velikie minei chet'i*), a collection of hagiographic writings consisting of 12 books, one for each month of the year, and providing a hagiographic reading for every day of the month. After his appointment as Metropolitan of Moscow, two new editions of the *Great Menology* were produced, adding many new texts in comparison with the first, Novgorodian, edition. Among these new hagiographies was a *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*.⁷⁴ The Vladimirian Edition of the *Life* was probably written by a monk called Mikhail from Vladimir, after Aleksandr's canonisation. This edition (which David Miller calls the Third Edition of the *Life*) was included in the *Great Menology* in 1550.⁷⁵ The edition of Vasilii-Varlaam was written some time after 1547 and was included in the Tsarskiy version of the *Great Menology* which was presented to Tsar Ivan IV in 1554.⁷⁶

Makariy's determination to provide the new Russian tsardom with a history did not end with the *Great Menology*, but bore more hybrid fruit in the last years of his life, with the organising of the writing of the *Book of Degrees* (*Stepennaya kniga*), a book of the genealogy of the tsars, the most sophisticated historical presentation of sixteenth-century Moscow. The genealogy was finished in 1563, just before the old metropolitan passed away, by his successor, Afanasiy.⁷⁷ It derived its narrative from the origins of political organisation and Christianity among the eastern Slavs of Kiev, proceeding through Vladimir-Suzdal to Moscow in the time of Ivan IV and Metropolitan Makariy. As the book was arranged by the representatives of each generation, from Ryurik to Ivan IV, Aleksandr Nevskiy was referred to as a representative of the eighth generation, counting from the first Christian ruler of Kiev, Prince Vladimir. Other editions of the *Life* were written to be attached to the *Book of Degrees* later; one such was the edition of Iona Dumin, written during the reign of Ivan's son, Feodor.

⁷⁴ Miller 1979, 297–8; Dmitrieva 1993, 209; Droblenkova 1988, 126–31.

⁷⁵ Okhotnikova 1987, 360.

⁷⁶ Miller 1979, 268. R. P. Dmitrieva refers to this as the Fourth Edition of the *Life*. Dmitrieva also argues that it was based on the *tserkovno-letopisnyi rasskaz* of the *Pskov II Chronicle*, which is quite a mild statement in view of the enormous reworking of Vasilii-Vaarlaam. Dmitrieva 1988, 113.

⁷⁷ Miller 1979, 313–17; Serov 1996, 210–11.

Using the sixteenth-century Moscow editions of the *Life* allows this study to examine what the new Moscow editions of the *Life* can reveal of the political purposes of Tsar Ivan IV, and to seek the basic motifs behind Aleksandr's canonisation in 1547. It also gives an opportunity to examine all the nuances and tones of the *Life* and to look at the image of Aleksandr as a whole, as a product of centuries of opinions and adaptations of the manifestation of an ideal prince.

PART ONE

THE MEDIEVAL IMAGE OF THE IDEAL RULER

1. THE WORLDLY AND THE BIBLICAL COMBINED IN ALEKSANDR'S BATTLES

1.1. *Aleksandr as a good ruler rewarded by God*

The understanding of past accidents as acts of fulfilment of the will of God, as proclaimed in Russian medieval chronicles, has in many ways shaped our concepts of the medieval view of the significance of the past. In its own way the *Life* of Aleksandr also offers us a narration of the events of the past, reflecting contemporary attitudes regarding the historical significance of certain events which took place in the Russian lands during his lifetime. Historical narration combined with princely eulogy is the basic essence of the *Life*, and at the beginning of this study some elemental details of that narration will be examined. This study touches upon the demands of historical source criticism, when the *Life* is used as a historical source, particularly in focusing on the descriptions of Aleksandr's battles, and in searching for their worldly and biblical models. The historical details of the *Life* from the period it describes are analysed, insisting on careful source criticism and without neglecting to seek the symbolic message of the *Life* as a Christian narrative.

It is often stated that medieval hagiographic narratives are so filled with rhetorical devices that the actual information becomes distorted.¹ Hence it is essential to regard the *Life* as an important source that gives us much information about not only the literal expressions of the time of its writing, but also the collective images of good and evil and the idealized image of a Christian prince. As the *Life* was subordinate to the norms of language and the literary etiquette of its times, this study begins with a survey of the most important literary patterns that affected its narrative. Only by observing the models that inspired its author can the question of the purpose served by those models in projecting Aleksandr's image be fully approached. In the first chapter of Part One the actual composition of the description of the battle of the Neva given in the hagiography is examined

¹ For this discussion see, for example, de Anna 1991, 26.

in order to determine what kinds of rhetorical devices or ritualised acts the writer of the *Life* has used.

In his quest for an ideal ruler, the author of the *Life* seeks to present his hero as a non-temporal, celestial ruler, using biblical allegories. He often quotes the Bible and apocryphal scriptures in his search for a heavenly allegory of a just and godly ruler. In a brief introduction he reveals his intention to write about the life of the pious Prince Aleksandr, referring to his own eyewitness accounts.² He recalls only the most necessary details about the birth of young Aleksandr, mentioning very briefly that Prince Yaroslav was his father and that his mother was called Feodosiya. He then makes the first of two direct references to the Prophet Isaiah, who seems to be one of the most central inspirations for the *Life* and its purposes. The significance of the Isaiah references has to be considered in the core of the message of this important prophet, who preached against foreign alliances during the time when the kingdom of Judah was under the threat of war from Arameans, Israelites and Assyrians (c. 740–700 BC). But Isaiah's words were not only directed against alliances with Egyptians and other neighbours; above all they were given as a moral standpoint on faith in God and justice in society. In his references to Isaiah the author of the *Life* quotes quite freely from this biblical author:

As the Prophet Isaiah says: 'Thus the Lord said: "I appoint the princes because they are sacred and I direct them."'”³

Begunov argued in one of his commentaries on the *Life* that the above reference is from Isaiah 13:3, but this can hardly be the case, since Isaiah speaks of totally different matters in this chapter, namely the host of the Lord who will punish evildoers; the content of his speech does not match the reference made in the *Life* of Aleksandr.⁴ Instead it is obvious that in this reference the author of the *Life* is merely exalting the prince through his office, after which he then moves to praise the personal qualities of Prince Aleksandr:

He was taller than others and his voice reached the people like a trumpet. His face was like that of Joseph, whom the pharaoh of Egypt

² We will return later to the identity of this anonymous writer.

³ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 187.

⁴ See Begunov's commentary in Begunov, *Istochniki i biografiya* 1995, 190.

placed as the next king after him in Egypt. His strength was part of the strength of Samson, and God gave him the wisdom of Solomon . . .⁵

Solomon as an allegorical representation of a just and righteous ruler makes a fine comparison with Aleksandr. King Solomon as an allegory of wisdom was adopted into the set of virtues recognised by the whole of Christian Europe. He was often mentioned as an ideal example of wisdom for Russian princes too, being especially highlighted in the eulogies of Olga in the *Primary Chronicle* (*Povest' vremennykh let*).⁶ In the early princely eulogies, formal reference to the ruler's wisdom was made in the necrology of Andrey Bogolyubskiy, who was mentioned as being as wise as Solomon.⁷ The same type of reference was attached to the eulogy of Prince Konstantin Vsevolodovich in the *Laurentian Chronicle* and repeated in the *Simeonov Chronicle*, which in 1208 described the ideal image of Prince Konstantin Vsevolodovich in the following terms:

Just as King Solomon arranged festivities for his priests and let the people come to his parties and blessed his people, and the people blessed their king . . . thus also the blessed Konstantin arranged festivities for his priests and comforted the people, and the people blessed Konstantin and said: 'Praised be God, for he gave Prince Vsevolod a wise son like him.' . . . God gave wisdom to Solomon, and likewise he put wisdom into the heart of Konstantin. And the fame of his wisdom spread so widely among the people that no one could count it.⁸

Solomon is used as an example of a ruler who is pious and whom God has already recognised in his lifetime, as the author of the *Life* claims that He recognised Aleksandr Yaroslavich. This was a very popular concept of the ideal ruler in early medieval times; Asser, Bishop of Sherborne repeats the same ideas in his *Life* of King Alfred (844–87), who was equated with King Solomon in early medieval England. Asser depicted how Solomon sought wisdom from God and despised the wealth and fame of this world. Because of his piety God rewarded him with both wisdom and renown.⁹

⁵ *Povesti o zhitii*, 187.

⁶ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 30.

⁷ *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 156.

⁸ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 45.

⁹ Asser's biography of King Alfred was composed in Latin, possibly 888 AD, although some scholars contend that the work was actually composed much later by an unknown hand. See Nelson 1993, 157–8.

The example of Solomon as a biblical parallel to Prince Aleksandr is demonstrated in the introduction to the *Life*, in which the narrative begins with a reference to the popular biblical story of the fame of Solomon and the visit of the Queen of Sheba. This is compared to the fame of Aleksandr and the visit of a certain Andreash from 'the Western Land'. After the rhetoric exalting Aleksandr's virtues—his courage, wisdom, physical beauty, and his manliness in war—the writer goes on to connect Aleksandr's fame with the actual narrative:

Once there came a powerful man from the Western Land, from those who call themselves 'the servants of God', to see Aleksandr in the bloom of his life, in the same way as the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon to hear his wisdom. This man, whose name was Andreash, saw Prince Aleksandr, returned to his own people, and told them: 'I have travelled through many countries and seen many people, but I have never met such a king among kings, nor such a prince among princes.'¹⁰

The visit of Andreash links the rhetorical laudation of a courageous and wise prince directly to the most exalted and important single event of the narrative, the story of the battle of the Neva.¹¹ In doing this, the author reveals his familiarity with the passage from the *Primary Chronicle* for the year 955, in which Princess Olga visited the Emperor of Constantinople in her search for wisdom. Olga is likened to the Queen of Sheba but, unlike the Ethiopian queen, Olga sought not earthly wisdom but (like Solomon) the wisdom of the soul.¹² In addition, the author of the *Life* of Aleksandr refers to the Psalter and the apocryphal Book of Wisdom, which are also mentioned in the chronicle passage on Olga's visit to Constantinople, where she was baptised and praised for her search for wisdom.¹³

For King Solomon said: 'Wisdom cannot enter a deceitful soul. It will rise, and it will watch in the midst of the roads, and it will sit at the gates of the mighty.'¹⁴

It is interesting to take a closer look at this new personification of the Queen of Sheba, the man called Andreash, who 'came . . . from

¹⁰ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 187.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Povest' vremennykh let*, 30.

¹³ *Wisd. of Sol.* 1; *Prov.* 8:1–3. Cf. *Povest' vremennykh let*, 30.

¹⁴ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 187.

the Western Land, from those who call themselves “The Servants of God”.¹⁵ This person has usually been identified with Andreas von Stirland (also called von Felben), a Grand Master of the Teutonic Order in 1241 and from 1248–53.¹⁶ This reference to Andreash in the *Life* has strengthened theories about the presumed diplomatic link that existed between the Swedes and the Germans in 1240, which was part of the papal plan directed against the Orthodox Russians. Many historians have constructed theories that the Swedes and Germans acted jointly against Russia, although no contemporary sources point directly to the existence of such an alliance, apart from the events described in the *Life*.¹⁷ This theory of a western coalition against Russia has met with both criticism and approval from modern historians.¹⁸

The few details that hint at Andreash’s origin, that he came from the western land, from those who called themselves the ‘Servants of God’, indicate that he was a member of the Teutonic Order. The *Life* is the only source, however, that reveals that Master Andreas really would have been in contact with Aleksandr Yaroslavich. The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* offers a brief description of Andreas von Stirland’s career in the service of the Teutonic Order, but gives no information on his having had any diplomatic connections with Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich.¹⁹ The mention of a member of the Teutonic Order giving praise to Aleksander is, of course, a detail of considerable significance. In naming Andreash as the visitor from the western countries, the author of the *Life* picked out a real person, with a name and origin, whereas the envious king who attacks at the River Neva is presented in the manner of a distant fairytale from the past, an anonymous ruler from an undefined ‘Land of Midnight’.

¹⁵ *Povesti o zhitiī*, 187.

¹⁶ Begunov, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo* 1995, 202; Zenkovsky 1974, 226.

¹⁷ Shaskol’skiy 1978, 155–7. Cf. Vahtola 1984, 10.

¹⁸ The latest to approve the old theory of western coalition has been the Finnish historian Jouko Vahtola; criticism has been given by the Danish historian John Lind and the Estonian scholar Anti Selart. Vahtola, *Tuomas-piispasta Birger-jaarlin* 1984, 10; Vahtola, *Finlands Kirchenpolitische Verbindungen* 1984, 488–516; Lind 1991, 69–295; Selart 2001, 162.

¹⁹ The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* contains a lengthy passage on the relationship of Master Andreas von Stirland with the Lithuanian king Mindaugas, and attributes Mindaugas’s conversion—albeit only temporary—to Christianity solely to Andreas’s diplomatic activities. *Die Livländische Reimchronic*, verses 3121–3608. Cf. Mažeika 2001, 198–9.

The story of the *Life* continues with the angry and jealous reaction of a Roman king from the Land of Midnight, who after hearing of Aleksandr's good reputation, spread far and wide by Andreash, boasted that he would conquer Aleksandr's country. He sent a messenger to Aleksandr, saying, 'If you can, resist me. I am already here conquering your land.'²⁰ The bragging of an envious king appears to have been a popular theme in medieval war literature. But before entering into this seemingly popular *topos* in war literature, it is a good idea to introduce a very important historic figure whose legend served as a significant model of a courageous warrior ideal for Aleksandr Nevskiy.

An author called Daniil the Prisoner (*Zatochnik*) wrote a *Prayer* (*Molenie Daniila Zatochnika*) or instructions to a prince, following the medieval genre of the 'Mirrors of Princes', in which he listed the ideal capabilities of a ruler.²¹ He has been named 'the Prisoner' because, according to his own writing, he seems to have lived in some form of slavery. His identity has remained obscure, but it is obvious that he was a learned and educated man who knew much about the literature of his time. His writing (which has been dated to the end of the 12th century or the beginning of the 13th) consists of many elements: rhetorical devices, biblical quotations (primarily from the Psalter and the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon), some quotations from a collection of aphorisms from Greek and Latin writers called 'the Bee', rhymed folk witticisms and satirical remarks.²² In his *Prayer* Daniil appeals to the goodwill of Prince Yaroslav (possibly the father of Aleksandr Nevskiy) to bring about some improvement in his condition. Daniil ends his appeal to the prince as follows:

O Lord, give our prince the strength of Samson, the bravery of Alexander, the intelligence of Joseph and the wisdom of Solomon, and multiply all the people under his heel. Glory be to our God, now, forever, and for eternity.²³

²⁰ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 188.

²¹ There is no certainty as to whom Daniil addressed his prayer. It has survived in many copies, and its different redactions address the texts to various persons: to the sons of Vladimir Monomakh or to the son of Vsevolod III, Yaroslav. Dmitriev 1997, 163. In one of the published texts the heading of the prayer reads 'The writing of Daniil the Prisoner, who wrote it to his prince, Yaroslav Volodimirovich'. *Molenie Daniila Zatochnika*, 164.

²² Likhachev 1987, 112–13.

²³ *Molenie Daniila Zatochnika*, 168.

The core emblems of an ideal ruler are presented here in much the same tone as later in the *Life* of Aleksandr. Particularly noticeable is the reputation of Alexander the Great of Macedonia as the ultimate example of bravery, which no doubt enhanced the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy as being as courageous as his ancient namesake.

Alexander the Great occupied the first place in war stories from the Hellenistic period all the way down to the Middle Ages. His popularity was immense throughout Christian Europe, and several legends grew side by side, while copies of his antique biographies were translated into medieval Latin and the vernacular languages. The boasting of an envious king is a central theme in the *Alexander Romance* by the so-called Pseudo-Callisthenes,²⁴ which relates the life of the famous world conqueror.²⁵ The Slavic translation of this romance, called *Aleksandriya*, is among the earliest surviving secular literature from medieval Russia. The story of Alexander was also incorporated into the Russian chronologies (*khronografy*) from the middle of the 13th century at the latest.²⁶ The *Alexander Romance* depicted the talent and skill of the young Alexander in the face of the mighty army of the Persian king, and the medieval Russian version relates how Darius, King of Persia, sent his messenger to Alexander, bragging about his own power and belittling Alexander's status. This led to a war in which Alexander defeated Darius's troops.²⁷

Closely related to the theme of the *Alexander Romance* was the epic Byzantine story of Digenes Akrites, which arose in the 10th century

²⁴ The author of the popular medieval *Alexander Romance* was supposed to be Callisthenes, Alexander's contemporary biographer. It is, however, a much later work, written during the 2nd or 3rd century AD in Egyptian Alexandria, a city full of memories of its founder and with a rich literate interest in his legends. Cf. The Oxford Classical Dictionary, Oxford 1970, 41, 894; Renault 1975, 18; Ross 1963, 5. The term 'romance' was attached much later to the work of Pseudo-Callisthenes, for the term was born in twelfth-century France where it was used for vernacular literature in order to distinguish it from that written in Latin. Thus it was in the 12th century when the appellation *Alexander Romance* became generally used for the work of Pseudo-Callisthenes. Bendz 1974, 438.

²⁵ Cary (1956) 1967.

²⁶ Tvorogov, *Aleksandriya Khronograficheskaya* 1987, 35–7. On the detailed history of the *Alexander Romance* in Russia, see my previous works, especially Mäki-Petäys, *Eufateelta Nevalle* 2002, 81–95. The difference between the chronicles and the chronologies is that Russian chronicles discuss Russian history, while chronologies represent world history, beginning from the Creation. They are compilations, using a wide source base, from the books of the Old Testament to Byzantine chronicles. They also included some popular military legends.

²⁷ *Aleksandriya*, 249–57.

and largely followed a model which emphasised the ideals of chivalry, symbolised also by Alexander the Great.²⁸ The story of Digenes Akrites has survived in six Greek manuscripts dating from the 14th to the 17th centuries,²⁹ together with three Russian manuscripts which date from the 17th and 18th centuries.³⁰ The Greek texts, particularly the fourteenth/fifteenth-century *Grottaferrata* manuscript, are usually considered to remain closest to the original story, but there are several scholars who believe that the Russian version of the tale (*Deyanie prezhykh vremen chelovek*, or in short, *Devgenievo deyanie*) reflect better the archaic features of the original story.³¹

In the Greek *Grottaferrata* version of the tale of Digenes, the Roman king Basil hears rumours about the fame of a hero and calls Digenes to meet him in order to see him with his own eyes. Digenes refuses to go and writes to the king that if he wishes to see his worthless servant he should ride himself down to the River Euphrates to meet him. The king then arrives at the river, where he meets Digenes, who then entertains the king with an exhibition of his physical strength. The king is quite impressed by what he sees, and restores to Digenes all the possessions which had been confiscated from his grandfather and confirms his authority over the border lands. The king and Digenes then part on the friendliest and warmest terms.³²

In the Russian version of the tale, the name Digenes is changed to the Russian form, Devgeni. The *Tale of Devgeni* (*Devgenievo deyanie*, literally translated as *The Deeds of Devgeni*) describes the meeting between the hero and the great king in a very different way to the

²⁸ Moenning 1993; Mavrogordato 1999, 13.

²⁹ Mavrogordato 1999, 82–4.

³⁰ A fourth, fifteenth to sixteenth-century manuscript was destroyed in the great fire of Moscow in 1812. Kuzmina 1962, 4.

³¹ Most western scholars do not regard the claims of archaism in the Russian *Tale of Devgeni* as justified. See, for example, Mavrogordato (1956) 1999, 25–6. It is evident, however, that the numerous Soviet scholars had some justifiable grounds for their claims. H. F. Graham wrote an excellent article in 1968 in which he illustrated the awkward situation creating the barrier between Soviet and western scholars. Graham 1968, 51–91. After the Belgian scholar Henry Grégoire first proposed a more archaic origin for the Russian *Tale* than any of the known Greek versions, many Russian and Soviet scholars expressed similar ideas. These included V. D. Kuz'mina, a leading Russian expert in this field who has made a careful study of the history and editions of the Russian *Tale of Devgeni*. Grégoire 1942; Kuz'mina 1962. See also Speranskiy 1922; Syrkina 1960; Shevchenko (1979–1980) 1982; Chernysheva 1989.

³² *Grottaferrata*, verses 971–1089.

Greek *Grottaferrata* version, being more familiar with the bragging theme of the *Alexander Romance*, in which Alexander met the claims of the envious and powerful Persian king Darius. The *Tale of Devgeni* includes an episode in which Devgeni receives a message from a certain Tsar Vasiliy:

Illustrious Devgeni! I would very much like to see you. Come to visit my domain, since your bravery and fortitude is known everywhere in the world. I love you with all my heart and would like to see you in the flower of your youth.³³

At first it seems that the attitude of Tsar Vasiliy is the same as that of King Basil in the Byzantine *Grottaferrata* version, but as the story goes on, it becomes evident that Tsar Vasiliy's mind was poisoned with envy of Devgeni. His sweet words did not deceive Devgeni, who took them more as a challenge to battle.³⁴

Devgeni answers the king proudly, like Alexander of Macedonia in the *Aleksandriya*, and accepts the challenge. The plot now unfolds in an almost identical way to that of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*. Tsar Vasiliy arrives with his army at the River Euphrates, where he establishes a camp and sets up his large tent.³⁵ Similarly, the *Life* of Aleksandr relates that the battleground was located beside a river, and that the king of the Land of Midnight 'arrived at the Neva in his insanity'.³⁶

Although V. D. Kuz'mina has presented strong arguments regarding the origin of the Russian *Tale of Devgeni*, which she dates to the 11th or 12th century,³⁷ it is a somewhat disputed question whether it was actually known in medieval Russia as early as that, because there are no manuscripts surviving from that period. Francis J. Thomson in particular has criticised the early dates of the Russian early medieval literary sources, on the basis that most of the manuscripts survived only in later copies.³⁸ The *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* nevertheless clearly indicates that its writer was familiar with the model for a hero going to war challenged by an envious and arrogant king, as given in the war classics discussed above.

³³ *Devgenievo deyanie*, 154.

³⁴ *Devgenievo deyanie*, 154–155.

³⁵ *Devgenievo deyanie*, 155.

³⁶ *Povesti o zhilii*, 188.

³⁷ Kuz'mina 1962, 90–109.

³⁸ Thomson 1999.

When observing what types of ritualised acts the writer of the *Life* used and how these affected the image of Aleksandr, one must first note that these ritualised acts confirmed the earthly ideal of a warrior. With the help of rhetoric borrowed from war descriptions, the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy was created along the lines of the pan-European medieval ideal of knighthood. This functioned through analogies borrowed from the literature.³⁹

An important feature of the war literature was the notion that Aleksandr Nevskiy, like Alexander of Macedonia and Digenes Akrites, started the battle on the defensive, being outnumbered in terms of troops:

... he led his small troop against the enemy, even before the many other regiments came, because he relied upon the help of the Holy Trinity. It was a great sorrow that his honourable father, Yaroslav the Great, did not know that his son, dear Aleksandr, had been attacked; but Aleksandr did not have time to send a message to his father because the enemy was approaching. Many men from the lands of Novgorod failed to join him in time because the prince was in a hurry to start the campaign.⁴⁰

It was crucial for the author to show that the hero was transcendent in his physical ability. No doubt the detail of the small number of Aleksandr's troops served this important element of the *topos*, in which the hero was supposed to meet a much larger army. Many of the medieval war classics emphasised the magnificent ability of the hero, highlighting how he could confront his enemies by himself. Devgeni defeated the troops of Tsar Vasiliy alone, as did the Emperor Vespasian, another idealised hero in Josephus Flavius's *De bello Judaico*.

The *Life* of Aleksandr recalls his virtues:

He was taller than others and his voice reached the people like a trumpet. His face was like that of Joseph, whom the pharaoh of Egypt placed as the next king after him in Egypt. His strength was part of the strength of Samson, and God gave him the wisdom of Solomon and his courage was like that of the Roman King Vespasian, who conquered the entire land of Judea. Once, during the siege of the city of Jeotapata, the burghers of the city made a sortie and defeated his army and Vespasian remained alone. But still he clashed with the enemy's army to the city gates and thereafter he jeered at his own

³⁹ See my earlier articles under the name Mäki-Petäys 1999, 163–80; Mäki-Petäys 2000, 22–7.

⁴⁰ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 188.

army and reproached them, saying: 'You abandoned me and left me alone.' And so was this Prince Aleksandr: he used to defeat but was never defeated.⁴¹

The history of the Jewish war, written by Josephus from 75–79 AD, was one of the significant works concerning the history of the sacred city of Jerusalem, and it was highly appreciated in Christian Europe during the Middle Ages. It was introduced into medieval Russia as well, for it too was interpolated into Russian chronologies during the 13th century at the latest.⁴² The author of the *Life* of Aleksandr was clearly underlining the *topos* of physical ability when he stated that Aleksandr overcame all his enemies and was never beaten.⁴³

Continuing the parallels with war description in the *Tale of Devgeni*, the description of the enemy camp in the *Life* is also interesting. It is recounted in the *Tale of Devgeni* how Tsar Vasiliy set up an enormous tent in his camp, the roof of which was coloured red and decorated with gold.⁴⁴ This luxurious tent clearly symbolised the tsar's wealth and power. The tent theme is taken up in the *Life* at the point where it left off in the *Tale*, the enemy tent finally being pulled down by one of Aleksandr Nevskiy's brave men, Savva:

He charged the great, golden-crowned tent and cut its pole. When the tent fell, Aleksandr's regiments were very much encouraged.⁴⁵

It was natural that Aleksandr's men should have been encouraged, because the fall of the tent symbolised the collapse of power and the defeat of the great ruler.

The earthly models for the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*—Alexander the Great of Macedonia, Digenes Akrites, the Roman emperor Vespasian, even Samson—represent the universal notion of an ideal warrior, known throughout Christian Europe, which gained great popularity in the medieval literature of chivalry and royalty. Side by side with representatives of the kings of Israel as Biblical ideals, they created an important model for the kingship and warrior roles of Aleksandr Yaroslavich.

⁴¹ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 187.

⁴² Tvorogov, 'Istoriya Iudeyskoy voyny' 1987, 214–15. For the textual relation of Josephus's text and the *Life* of Aleksandr, see Serebryanskiy 1915, 183; Mansikka 1913, 27–32; Meshcherskiy 1958, 102–03.

⁴³ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 187; see Serebryanskiy 1915, 183.

⁴⁴ *Devgenievo deyanie*, 155.

⁴⁵ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 190.

The idealised heroic image of Aleksandr Nevskiy was supported by drawing a parallel between his name and that of Alexander the Great, one of the best known warrior ideals for medieval people. In Alexander's case, *Nomen est omen*. The comparison of Aleksandr Nevskiy on the ideal level with one of the most popular heroes of medieval romances made it possible to raise Aleksandr Nevskiy's mortal figure to the status of a war hero. Without a ready model, the image would have been incomplete, but through this analogy, Aleksandr Nevskiy was placed on the map of medieval multidimensional existence.⁴⁶

As Kuchkin has argued, it is likely that, like all the other members of his family and according to Orthodox custom, Aleksandr had his name from the saint whose feast-day was nearest to his birthday. In Kuchkin's well-argued calculations this would probably have been St Alexander of Rome, who is commemorated on 13 May.⁴⁷ The symbolism of words was effective, and thus it is very likely that the name of Aleksandr was one of the key factors that inspired the writer of the *Life* to record his heroic story of a successful and noble warrior. The names of the saints were believed to confer the features and qualities of their original bearers on the children to whom they were given.⁴⁸ The Greek name Alexander means 'protector of the people', which fits in well with how the *Life* presents its hero, not to mention the comparison with the greatest war hero that this epoch knew, Alexander of Macedonia.

The huge popularity of Alexander the Great in early thirteenth-century Russia is also manifested in the sculptures and reliefs on the outer wall of the Church of St Demetrius (*Dmitrovskiy sobor*) in Vladimir. This church was built by Aleksandr's grandfather, Vsevolod III, as the church of the princely family. Among the larger reliefs placed on its four walls is a carving depicting an event based on one of the most popular medieval myths of Alexander the Great, in which he is described making a miraculous heavenly flight.⁴⁹

Thus the posthumous hagiography of Aleksandr Yaroslavich drew a parallel with the greatest of all secular war heroes in European culture. How was it possible to combine this secular emphasis on

⁴⁶ Mäki-Petäys 1999.

⁴⁷ Kuchkin 1996, 5–6.

⁴⁸ Gurevich 1990, 50; Bartlett 1993, 270–4.

⁴⁹ The legend of Alexander's heavenly flight is based on Pseudo-Callisthenes. Cf. Wagner 1980, 393, and plate 337.

martial war exploits with the Christian virtues of a pious ruler? Another great king depicted alongside Alexander of Macedonia in the *Dmitrovskiy sobor* reliefs was King David, which leads us to an examination of the biblical ideals of the heroic representation of Aleksandr Nevskiy.

1.2. *The battle of the Neva and the medieval concept of truth*

Just as Alexander of Macedonia and Devgeni functioned as models of a heroic warrior entering fearlessly into battle, the theme of the faithful warrior counting on God's providence was also essential to eschatological history, in which God stood on the side of the righteous. As a hagiographer, the author of the *Life* aimed to present something more superb than real, worldly events. The figure of Aleksandr Yaroslavich was created from an ideal of Christian behaviour and piety which was an essential feature of a ruler, assuring him of divine favour on the battlefield and in government. As the Byzantine tradition adopted at a very early stage the concept of the Christian 'Roman' empire as the real successor to Israel, God's chosen people, this apocalyptic framework redefined the historical limits of religion and empire.⁵⁰

Since the Byzantine Empire reflected the heavenly kingdom, and through divine providence was the new Kingdom of Israel, imperial wars and success in government were proof of God's blessing, just as the loss of their kingdom had been a punishment for the Jews. When the emperor marched onto the battlefield, Christ Himself accompanied him. Divine aid in Byzantine warfare demonstrated the role of the emperor in eschatological history.⁵¹ In accordance with the Christian concept of the role of the righteous ruler in world history, the Russian Orthodox Church backed up the authority of the ruling prince. It created an image of a ruler with ideal Christian virtues whom God would reward, just as he would punish evil rulers and their subjects.⁵² In this respect the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* echoed the Christian concept of the ideal ruler, and it becomes clear why Isaiah's teachings and the example of Hezekiah's good morals were

⁵⁰ Cf. for example Mango (1965) 1984, 30–6.

⁵¹ Olster 1999, 53–5.

⁵² Mil'kov 2000, 108.

held up as key models for the ideal image of Aleksandr Yaroslavich.

As the hagiographic mode of presentation submitted the clerical biography of Aleksandr Yaroslavich to the treatment of idealisation, it is clear that worldly martial examples were not enough to express the significance of Aleksandr's heroic exploits. Hence the author used biblical parallels in his narration. He assigned paramount significance to the description of the battle of the Neva by suggesting that the confrontation between the Roman king and Aleksandr had a clear and crystallised model in the Holy Scriptures.

Along with King Solomon, David became an important model for a king in medieval times, when Christianity was adopted by the Franks, the Germans and the Slavs, for God had promised to establish an everlasting kingdom for King David's descendants. Thus, in a biblical light, a true Christian king was a descendant of King David, the first anointed king, who thereby became a model for monarchs not only in Israel, but also in the whole Christian world. His musical skills became proverbial, and many psalms were attributed to him.⁵³ As the Psalter was one of the most popular sources of biblical reading in medieval Russia, it is no wonder that an image of David playing his lute dominates the rich stone carvings of the Church of St Demetrius. A similar image is also perpetuated in the stone carvings of the Church of the Protection of the Mother of God by the River Nerl (*Tserkov' Pokrova na Nerli*), built by Prince Andrey Bogolyubskiy.⁵⁴ It is Alexander the Macedonian, King David and King Solomon who are depicted as the most imposing kings in the reliefs of the princely churches of Vladimir. The biblical examples of the *Life* of Aleksandr clearly follow the popular tradition of his ancestors in the choice of models of an ideal ruler.

The author of the *Life* uses King David (c. 1010–970 BC) as one of the key inspirations among the biblical kings, as someone who was one of the most outstanding among the kings of Israel and greatly favoured by God during his life. The author has selected passages from the Psalter in which David prays for strength against his godless enemies and requests God's help, and has inserted those actions to be performed by Prince Aleksandr. When news of the appearance of the Roman king at the River Neva arrived in Novgorod, Aleksandr reacted like his biblical ideal:

⁵³ See Alter 1999; McKenzie 2000.

⁵⁴ Wagner 1980, plate 330.

And remembering the song from the Psalter he said: 'O Lord, judge those who offend me. Smite those who set themselves against me and come to my aid with arms and shields.' Having finished his prayer, he got up and bowed to the Archbishop Spiridon, who blessed him and let him go. Leaving the church, he wiped away his tears and began to encourage his regiments, saying: 'God is in truth, not in power. Let us remember the psalmist who said: "Some came with weapons and some on horses, but we called upon the Lord God for our help and they were defeated and fell, but we rose up and stood straight."' ⁵⁵

A speech of encouragement to the troops followed the classical rhetorical device used by the Greeks and the Romans in their historiography. Thucydides had used the device of war orations, which was then adopted by later historians and became more and more rhetorical in character. Polybios had examined the exhortations (*parakleiseis*) of generals to their armies, in particular the speech delivered immediately before battle, and both Arrian and Quintus Curtius Rufus reported how Alexander the Great addressed his men before the battles of Issos and Gaugamela. There is every reason to believe that battle exhortations belong fully to the conventions of historiographical rhetorics. The genre of battle exhortations presents a continuation of the ancient historiographic tradition, which was eagerly imitated by later medieval authors of chronicles. ⁵⁶

Aleksandr's battle orations link his *Life* with the important, and often overlooked, genre which stimulated the fighting spirit of medieval armies. Battle orations not only appealed to the chivalric and martial virtues of bravery, valour, manliness and prowess, but also sought to present the fight as a just one. The purpose of these orations in medieval chronicles was to assure soldiers that God would help them in the coming battle, and the *topoi* from the speeches were important psychological supports for morale in the battle itself. ⁵⁷

Not only were David's battle exhortations copied in the *Life*; so too was the example of presenting his war party which distinguished itself in battle. ⁵⁸ The *Life* singles out by name six of the brave men who fought alongside Aleksandr. ⁵⁹ A similar theme of brave men is

⁵⁵ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 188.

⁵⁶ Hansen 1993, 161–80.

⁵⁷ Bliese 1989, 201–19.

⁵⁸ Pss. 20:8–9 and 35:1–3.

⁵⁹ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 189–90.

found in descriptions of King David's war excursions in the second book of Samuel, and the formula is exactly the same: the name and tribe of each hero is mentioned, and then his heroic deeds are stated briefly.⁶⁰ Serebryanskiy argued that the episode of the six brave men fighting with Aleksandr's troops beside the Neva was a later interpolation, because in his opinion it distracts attention from the storyline, as does the miracle that happened at the River Izhora. These parts are absent from the *Pskov II Chronicle*, which led Serebryanskiy to argue that the latter is older and original.⁶¹ However, this argument is not at all in harmony with the whole concept that the *Life* of Aleksandr presents. On the contrary, it was essential for the hagiographer to present his hero as an ideal king and warrior from the beginning, and that was not possible without a good and sufficient model to which Prince Aleksandr's actions could be referred. King David and his brave warriors was one of the models the author utilized, not only in the description of the battle of the Neva, but in a later reference to David and his warriors in his description of the Battle on the Ice.⁶²

Apart from the formal parallels with David and Solomon, the most important parallel with reference to the heroic defence at the Neva is the one in which Aleksandr's battle is compared to the biblical story of King Hezekiah's war, which again emphasises the teachings of Isaiah and stresses the good morals of a righteous ruler which will find reward from God. The entire battle, with the arrival of the king from the Land of Midnight, his arrogant appearance beside the Neva and the words of his messengers, forms a parallel with the biblical event in which King Hezekiah of Judah confronted Sennacherib, King of Assyria, who sent his messenger Rabsake to intimidate him on the eve of the Assyrian attack on Jerusalem.⁶³ As we have noted already, this *topos* of arrogant boasting was popular in medieval war literature, and the pattern was brilliantly depicted in the Holy Scriptures. In the *Life*, Aleksandr's reaction to the threat presented by the king of the Land of Midnight was to become 'heated by his heart' and to go to church.⁶⁴ Hezekiah, in the Bible, 'rent

⁶⁰ 2 Sam. 21:15–22; 2 Sam. 23:8–39.

⁶¹ Serebryanskiy 1915, 177–81.

⁶² *Povesti o zhiti*, 191.

⁶³ 2 Kings 18; Isa. 36.

⁶⁴ *Povesti o zhiti*, 188.

his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.⁶⁵ Both of them made stirring speeches to their troops to encourage them in the face of the enemy threat.⁶⁶

As the most significant allusion to Hezekiah's battle with the Assyrian king in the description of the Neva battle, God is described as allowing the same miracle to happen as happened in Jerusalem, when His angel killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers during the night:⁶⁷

There happened a miracle which reminds us of the one which took place in olden times, during the reign of King Hezekiah, when Jerusalem was attacked by Sennacherib, King of Assyria. Suddenly there appeared an angel of the Lord, who killed 185,000 Assyrian warriors, and when morning came their bodies were found there. The same occurred after Aleksandr's victory when he defeated the king: numerous enemy soldiers who had been killed by an angel of the Lord were found on the other bank of the River Izhora, which Aleksandr's regiments had not reached.⁶⁸

Thus the king of Judah, Hezekiah, is presented as the king whom Aleksandr Nevskiy ultimately emulates in his actions. Although he is spiritually paralleled with Solomon and David, through his actions the entire battle of the Neva is likened to the confrontation between King Hezekiah and the Assyrian King Sennacherib. Hezekiah's significance in biblical history lies in his piety, which God rewarded by rescuing Jerusalem from the conquest of the forcefully expanding kingdom of Assyria during Hezekiah's lifetime. Around the year 722 BC, Sennacherib, King of Assyria conquered Samaria and annexed the Kingdom of Israel. Hezekiah ruled in Judah during the years 716–687, at a time when Assyria had expanded its realm and annexed the northern part of Israel, so that only southern Judah and its capital city, Jerusalem, lay outside Assyrian territory. This is the battle that the Bible reports, intimating that Jerusalem remained free during Hezekiah's reign because of the piety of its king.⁶⁹

The significance of Prince Aleksandr as a second Hezekiah is of the utmost importance when viewing the contemporary events of Russian history, which are not described overtly in the *Life* but are described elsewhere, in the medieval Russian chronicles. The Mongol

⁶⁵ 2 Kings 19:1; cf. Isa. 37:1.

⁶⁶ *Povesti o zhitiī*, 188; cf. 2 Chron. 32:6–8.

⁶⁷ Isa. 37:36; 2 Kings 19:35.

⁶⁸ *Povesti o zhitiī*, 190.

⁶⁹ Oded 1971.

conquest is one theme that lurks very profoundly behind the heroic image of Aleksandr, even though the hagiography is ultimately silent about it. This becomes evident only through the parallels between Hezekiah and Aleksandr, and when the symbolic significance of Aleksandr's victories is considered, as the battle of the Neva was fought at a time when all the other Russian principalities were laid under siege by the Mongol conquest. Aleksandr's victory over the Swedes took place at the same time as a fatal assault was bringing the other Russian principalities to their knees. By paralleling Aleksandr to Hezekiah, the author could silently acknowledge the Mongol conquest as a reality, although he did not speak of it aloud, as during Hezekiah's defence of Jerusalem the northern part of Israel was already laid under the Assyrian conquest.

As the Greek name Alexander means 'defender of the people',⁷⁰ the Hebrew name Hezekiah means 'God is my strength'.⁷¹ The significance of a warrior's name was obviously of the utmost symbolic importance, since another hero, Joseph, the son of Nun—to whom Aleksandr was likened during the Battle on the Ice—was in the words of the apocalyptic Book of Sirak 'according to his name great in liberating God's chosen people.'⁷² Because of Hezekiah's great victory over the Assyrians, however, it was he who came to represent the image of the ideal warrior in the Jewish books of Aggadah, and his victory over Sennacherib was even related to the apocalyptic Messianic fight with Gog and Magog.⁷³ Among the ritualised acts that the author of the *Life* chose from the Bible as models for the battle of the Neva, he could hardly have found a closer parallel to represent the young Prince Aleksandr fighting his western neighbours on the remote borderlands of Novgorod. But when selecting this parallel, he must also have had its biblical significance in mind.

Thus it is evident that not only was the author of the *Life* well aware of the literary etiquette of hagiographic presentation and the description of Christian virtues but, above all, that he sought to elaborately present the image of a ruler who discharged his office with success and was rewarded in the highest possible way by God. The

⁷⁰ Liddell & Scott 1953, 62.

⁷¹ Oded 1971.

⁷² Sirak 46:1.

⁷³ Grintz 1971.

fact that God was pleased with Aleksandr was demonstrated by the divine help that he received on the battlefield, and ultimately by his military success. But by choosing biblical parallels from Hezekiah's battle with Sennacherib, the author was also making a statement of relevance to apocalyptic history. It is clear that the concepts of narration in the *Life* contain only a slight touch of reality and cannot be regarded as echoes of popular, orally transmitted military legends.

The symbolism of the description of the battle of the Neva, however, has been ignored by many historians, who have treated the information given in the *Life* as facts from the history of medieval Russian warfare. This enthusiasm for reconstructing actual historical occurrences with the help of the saint's life is regrettable, as it may entirely mislead a researcher who is unfamiliar both with medieval literature and with the fact that the text was created to describe a particular ideal image, which was represented in terms of already familiar phrases, formulae and metaphors. The battle scenes in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* form a cluster of pre-existing literary images. In the medieval way of thinking the great episodes that took place in biblical history formed a pattern that was right and true.⁷⁴ This means that the *Life* sets interpretative traps for researchers who are unable to understand the world of medieval symbolism.

As an example of the mistreatment of the details given in the battle descriptions of the *Life*, one may take the article of A. V. Shishov, who reconstructed almost the entire battle of the Neva in the light of information from the hagiography. According to him, Aleksandr wounded the commander of the Swedes in the face, exactly as mentioned in the *Life*.⁷⁵

Thereafter, Aleksandr decided to charge the enemy at the sixth hour of the day, and there was a great battle with those Romans, in which he destroyed an endless number of them and left his mark on the king's face with the blade of his lance.⁷⁶

In Shishov's interpretation, a natural outcome of this encounter was that the commander of the Swedes was no longer able to participate in the battle, because his eyesight was clouded with blood. This meant that the Swedes were forced to fight without their commander,

⁷⁴ Le Goff 1985, 171; cf. Likhachev 1969, 15.

⁷⁵ Shishov 1995, 35.

⁷⁶ *Povesti o zhizni*, 189.

which greatly increased the difficulties that they faced. Shishov even notes that some Russian researchers have underestimated Aleksandr's military genius and merit as a national hero.⁷⁷ The episode in which Aleksandr wounds the enemy leader in the face can be interpreted, however, as something other than real military action. Kirpichnikov, for example, thinks that this scene is a symbol indicating that his troops had caused damage to the enemy's front line.⁷⁸

The closest model for this heroic act in literature is provided by the biography of Daniil of Galicia, which is included in the *Hypatian Chronicle*. This relates how Daniil wounded his opponent in the face with his spear during the fighting against the Hungarians in 1231.⁷⁹ According to Begunov's explanation, which seems logical, wounding someone in the face refers to the old Roman custom of the master putting his mark on the face of a slave. Thus, the function of the text would be to signify to the reader that an opponent had been humiliated to the extent of assuming the status of a slave.⁸⁰ The Holy Scriptures describe how Sennacherib, in his confrontation with Hezekiah, also left the battlefield with shame on his face.⁸¹ What could be a clearer mark of shame than a scar on the face of the enemy leader, received in the lost battle? It is clear that we cannot interpret the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in any other way than through symbols.

In the medieval source material certain elements which have a crucial influence on the quality of the image are often only stylistic forms of rhetoric, expressions of the culture and style of a particular period.⁸² Mastery of rhetorical devices played a significant role in medieval hagiographic literature, and the ability to use rhetoric indicated a writer's learning and wisdom. It is precisely the emphasis placed on the rhetorical aspect of the hagiographies that has caused the historical value of the genre to be questioned. The distorted information and formal descriptions dominate the genre of hagiographies as historical sources. In order to benefit from using hagiographies in the study of history, we must ask what their writers

⁷⁷ Shishov 1995, 35.

⁷⁸ Kirpichnikov 1995, 27–8.

⁷⁹ *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 172.

⁸⁰ Begunov 1969, 741.

⁸¹ 2 Chron. 32:21.

⁸² De Anna 1991, 26.

understood as being the truth. How did medieval writers themselves understand the concept of truth?

Let us allow the writer of the life of another medieval saint to answer this question. Walter Daniel, a close friend of St Aelred (c. 1109–66)⁸³ and the writer of his hagiography, explained that exaggerated metaphors are used because as stylistic tools of effect they help the reader to understand better the truth of the occurrence. Walter's viewpoint was based on the medieval theological view that the world was created by the Word of God and that God left his Word (*logos*) to people as a tool for salvation.⁸⁴ Thus a medieval writer did not attempt to make his reader believe that the forms used in his texts ultimately originated from his own pen. The purpose of this symbolic system was to induce the reader to recognise the object of description through the right kind of association. The rhetoric of hagiographies dealt above all with recognition and associations. Both hagiographic and secular literature continued the tradition of the biographies of Antiquity in presenting the pious behaviour of the main character as an example for the behaviour considered proper in society. This meant that history was built up from models and symbols. The virtues of the heroes of hagiographies arose from either struggles in their conscience, *bellum intestinum*, or struggles with some external evil power, the temptations of Satan.⁸⁵ The traditional Christian hagiography replaced individualism with a sharp *civitas Dei* and *civitas homini* contrast.⁸⁶

The *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* describes its main character in battle with a concrete flesh and blood enemy, and in this respect it follows the tradition of classical biographies, in which the object of description was an action by an individual on behalf of society. Although the *Life* is strongly centred on a secular war theme, there is still reason to examine the relationship between its spiritual aspect and heroic individualism.

The *Life* contains a wealth of epic substance that deserves the attention of a historian. In the words of Kenneth Burke, literary style is a 'way of building the mental equipment by which one handles

⁸³ St Aelred was a Cistercian monk and abbot of Rievaulx abbey in Yorkshire. He was a productive homilist and historian.

⁸⁴ See Heffernan 1988, 110–13.

⁸⁵ Heffernan 1988, 114–52.

⁸⁶ See Heffernan 1988, 156.

the significant factors of his time.⁸⁷ Epic war stories also have their purpose; their function is to emphasise bravery and sacrifice on behalf of a group. This in turn makes it possible for a common audience to identify with the hero and to create a model for identification. According to Burke, this identity is not an individualistic issue. The fact that a secular hero is the object of imitation indicates a process in which a hero possessing individualistic features is replaced by a collective body.⁸⁸

Even though it is a saint's life, the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* is not an entirely typical guidebook to the spiritual life, because it makes such extensive use of the genre of war stories. This is the reason why a large number of researchers have initially considered it to be a pure war story, to which elements typical of hagiographies, such as prayers and references to the Bible, have been added later.⁸⁹ John Fennell mentions that it is a combination of hagiographic and annalistic styles,⁹⁰ and Zenkovsky follows Serebryanskiy in believing that it was first written by one of Aleksandr's close friends soon after his death and that prayers and biblical symbols were added later, disrupting the original stylistic cohesion.⁹¹

Such attempts to impose the limits of one genre on the style of the *Life* are not convincing, since the combination of different literary styles was not uncommon in medieval Russian literature. On the contrary, it was practised when necessary throughout the Middle Ages.⁹² Even John Fennell, a respected expert on medieval Russia and its literature, while reaching the conclusion that the *Life* was from the pen of a single individual, found its stylistic changes strange and ended up wondering whether the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* should be classified as a secular hagiography or a religious biography.⁹³

Stylistically, the *Life* possesses features typical of battle descriptions in the early chronicles; its phraseology is also conventional. The syntax is identical to that of the war tales of the chronicles (*voinskaya povest'*), featuring short clauses joined by the conjunction *i* (and), and an absence of subordination except for the occasional participle or

⁸⁷ Burke 1984, 34.

⁸⁸ Burke 1984, 35–6, 263.

⁸⁹ Bortnes 1996, 22.

⁹⁰ Fennell & Stokes 1974, 108.

⁹¹ Zenkovsky 1974, 224–5; cf. Serebryanskiy 1915, 174–94.

⁹² See Likhachev 1967, 40–86.

⁹³ Fennell & Stokes 1974, 110–11.

gerund used to relieve the monotony. The secular and hagiographic passages blend smoothly into one another and in spite of the stylistic contrast between the Spartan military style and the more florid religious passages, one is not aware of an abrupt transition. This is due to the author's skill in providing his narrative with motivation and constructing a cohesive storyline between the relatively small single events.⁹⁴

Confusion caused by the stylistic admixture typical of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* is primarily a problem for western researchers. Russian researchers have emphasised more how the history of the written language is above all a history of norms. According to Boris Uspenskiy, language and norms are tied so tightly to each other that when one studies the history of the written language one is also studying cultural history.⁹⁵ Language and style are always consciously selected means of presentation which have an essential effect on the image received from the content of the story. The language used in Russian medieval literature was different from that spoken at the time. Old Bulgarian, known to us better as Church Slavonic, became the common literary language of the eastern Slavs after their conversion to Christianity. Everything that was significant and part of the divine order of the world was written in chronicles, and it was characteristic of medieval theological thought for history to be understood as a divine drama which began with the Fall and was to end with the Second Coming of Christ.⁹⁶ The entire earthly wanderings of humankind thus constituted a battle between God and Evil directed by God's providence. Everything that occurred in the world, including the past, belonged to this drama. Wars were one aspect of the whole picture and they had a significant position in medieval eschatological thinking.

The historicism of medieval Russian chronicles created a very coherent understanding of history as an essential part of human salvation. For this reason, it would have been quite strange, even impossible, for war narratives to have been written in any other way than

⁹⁴ Fennell & Stokes 1974, 113–14.

⁹⁵ Uspenskiy 1987, 1–9; cf. Adrianova-Perets 1947, 9.

⁹⁶ See Uspenskiy 1987, 65. After the breakdown of the empire of Kiev, a few individual words of the spoken language, *drevnerusskiy yazyk*, started to become included in written Church Slavonic. There are only seven isolated words of the spoken language in the *Life*, and its influence can therefore be regarded as minimal. See Kozhin 1981, 95–101.

the normative one. By analogy with the traditional hagiographic genre, war stories also included a ritualistic system of symbols, although the rituals themselves were quite different from those in hagiographic literature, which dealt with monks, ascetics and martyrs. From the theological point of view, war stories not only describe the private experiences of individuals, but through certain sentence structures they also reflect the history of the salvation of the world, and the part that an individual human being can play in it.

As noted in 1947 by V. P. Adrianova-Perets, medieval writing in Russia was characterised by its collective nature. Authors recorded not their personal and individual feelings or notions of the world, but narratives that were in complete harmony with all other written texts, so that the whole written tradition strove towards harmony and the avoidance of discordant information. Thus individuals were described as impersonal characters, in portraits drawn with only a few lines. The tool for bringing out the eternal ideals of good was the physical and moral beauty of the hero.⁹⁷ Thus the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* is not a biography of a prince but a narrative that gives us an idealised image of a physically and morally virtuous prince.

Medieval Russian writers had at their disposal a wide selection of well-established phrases that fitted the literary etiquette of the time. These formed the building materials with which they constructed their stories.⁹⁸ No sharp divisions existed between literary genres, and the title of each individual narrative could vary between manuscripts. The titles expressed loosely what stylistic devices the writer was going to use, beginning with such words as *deyanie* (deeds), *opisanie* (writings), *povest'* (story or tale), *zhitie* (life), or *molenie* (prayer).⁹⁹ The title of the *Life of Aleksandr* also varied to some extent between manuscripts, and its mixed style reflected its dualistic nature, so that one could classify it as belonging both to the genre of hagiographies of saints and to that of war tales.

What has stimulated speculation among researchers into the *Life* is how a hagiography and a war story can be combined. Why have so many researchers been so bewildered by its seemingly confusing style? One answer could be that they have automatically interpreted

⁹⁷ Adrianova-Perets 1947, 9.

⁹⁸ Likhachev 1967, 84–94.

⁹⁹ Likhachev 1967, 40–60.

wars as lying in the secular realm, a misunderstanding which is rooted in misinterpretation of the medieval spiritual world and the Orthodox religion. What is secular if everything is created by God and past occurrences are part of the grand drama of salvation? The role of a good ruler was after all of paramount importance for the whole of society.

The mastery of different literary styles was for its part a demonstration that the writer knew the demands of literature and the language. If the *Life* had not followed these demands, it would have been as if an actor reciting his lines had whispered his threats and roared his confessions of love. The use of the right rhetoric and language helped to transmit an appropriate image to the reader. In this respect, the rhetoric itself served to transmit the image, rendering it clear, easy to recognise and already familiar to some extent. One should take these demands regarding the associations of medieval rhetoric into account when using the *Life* as a historical source. As the ideal prince, Aleksandr Yaroslavich was paralleled not only to worldly war heroes like his namesake, the conqueror Alexander the Great but, most importantly, to the kings of Israel who served as eternal Christian models for the righteous, courageous and pious ruler. Side by side with the examples that the princely court of Vladimir had long distinguished as the ideal Christian rulers—David and Solomon—Hezekiah arose as the one distinguished example for this treatment in the description of the Neva battle.

1.3. *SS Boris and Gleb as examples of just war*

The fact that the medieval Russian concepts of past and present were deeply rooted in an eschatological framework formed a peculiar intellectual understanding of God's role with regard to humankind. The explanation of catastrophes as the will of God, as punishment for the sins of humanity, occupied a special place in the concept of Christian history.¹⁰⁰ Angels occupied a very significant position in the implementation of God's will, as they were the mechanism by which

¹⁰⁰ Mil'kov 2000, 5–162. The theme of punishment by God as an explanation for historical catastrophes such as famines and wars is more thoroughly discussed in Part Two, Chapter 3.

good people were helped and evildoers punished. Their strength was demonstrated especially clearly in apocalyptic visions in which the host of angels confronted the Antichrist in the last and decisive battle before the end of the world. The famous eschatological revelation of Methodius of Patara envisaged the host of angels fighting against the forces of Islam.¹⁰¹

Beside the angels, the saints also functioned as mediators between God and humankind, and the description of the battle of the Neva mentions both angels and saints acting as intermediaries for the execution of God's will. The saints whom Aleksandr particularly relied on, according to the *Life*, were the most important Russian saints, the Martyr Princes Boris and Gleb.

On Sunday, July 15th, the feast-day of the six hundred and thirty Holy Fathers who attended the Council of Chalcedon and of the holy martyrs Kirikos and Iuletta, he moved against his enemies, because he relied on the help of the holy martyrs Boris and Gleb.¹⁰²

These martyr brothers had an important role in bringing victory to Aleksandr. Just before the battle, the chief of a local tribe in Ingria called Pelgusiy saw a vision in which SS Boris and Gleb hurried to help their kinsman:

There was a certain man, a chief of the land of Izhora, whose name was Pelgusiy and who was in charge of watching the seashore. He was baptised, but lived with his tribe, which remained pagan. After he received the holy baptism he was named Philip. He lived very piously, fasting every Wednesday and Friday, and therefore God wanted him to see an awesome vision on that day. Let us talk briefly about it: after Pelgusiy had scouted around and determined the power of the enemy, he went to meet Prince Aleksandr to tell him about the enemy's camp and fortifications. Pelgusiy remained on the seashore watching both roads and did not sleep the entire night. When the sun began to rise, he heard a loud noise from the sea and saw a moving ship, and in the midst of the ship stood the holy martyrs, Boris and Gleb, dressed in crimson vestments and embracing each other. The men rowing appeared as if in clouds, and Boris said: 'Brother Gleb, order them to row to help our kinsman Aleksandr.'

¹⁰¹ Mil'kov 2000, 41–6.

¹⁰² *Povesti o zhiti*, 188. The traditional date given in the *Life* as the day on which Aleksandr Nevskiy confronted the Swedes at the Neva was 15 July, feast-day of the martyrs Kirikos and Iuletta. The Council of Chalcedon is actually celebrated on 16 July, but by some mistake it was connected here with the same day. Fennell 1988, 302.

Pelgusiy was awestruck by this vision and by these words of the martyrs, and he did not move until the ship disappeared from his sight. Soon afterwards Aleksandr arrived. Pelgusiy was full of joy when he saw him and told him alone what he had seen. The prince said to him: 'Do not tell this to anyone.'¹⁰³

Boris and Gleb were the first Russian saints to be canonised, in 1072, and are generally characterised as military saints and protectors of Russia.¹⁰⁴ Gail Lenhoff, who studied the liturgical texts used in the office for the feast-day of SS Boris and Gleb, noted that the Novgorodian service from the 15th century strongly projected an image of the martyred princes as patrons of imperial power, while the majority of the prayers in the earliest services had been directed at healing and purification. Thus the motif of guarding the fatherland took precedence over the themes of the earlier twelfth-century services. The fifteenth-century *troparion* to the saints praised them as a heavenly rain nurturing their fatherland, and called upon them to guard the citizens and protect them from the enemies of their princes. In the fourth *sticheron aposticha* for Little Vespers, the saints were addressed as a 'consecrated duo' and 'luminescent warriors'.¹⁰⁵

It seems evident that the *Life* had a considerable impact on the development of the cult of Boris and Gleb as warrior saints, as it serves as one of the first indications of the transition of the cult to such a role. Helen Prochazka sees the main function of the saints' role in war tales to be indicators of which side God had chosen.¹⁰⁶ This indeed seems to be the case in the *Life*. God's chosen side is also reflected in the second war tale in the *Life*, the battle on Lake Peypus, in which Aleksandr calls upon God to help him as He had done for Moses against Amalek and for Prince Yaroslav against his 'cursed' brother Svyatopolk,¹⁰⁷ perpetrator of the infamous fratricide of the martyr brothers Boris and Gleb, just as Cain had slain Abel.

The strong emphasis on Boris and Gleb is interesting in several ways. First, it appears that the *Life* was decisive in the development of Boris and Gleb into military saints. Before looking at how Boris and Gleb fulfilled their position as illustrious warriors in the 15th

¹⁰³ *Povesti o zhitii*, 189.

¹⁰⁴ Prochazka 1985, 492.

¹⁰⁵ Lenhoff 1989, 70–1.

¹⁰⁶ Prochazka 1987, 505–16.

¹⁰⁷ *Povesti o zhitii*, 191.

century, it is more relevant to look at their actual context in the *Life*. How does the emphasis on Boris and Gleb affect Aleksandr's behaviour when threatened by his neighbouring enemies? It is interesting to examine Aleksandr's reaction to the physical menace posed by the Roman king from the Land of Midnight. Just as Boris and Gleb were innocent victims of their brother's threat, so Aleksandr is presented as weeping humbly after hearing of the arrogant and unjustified threats made by the Roman king. He is clearly acting as a victim, and thus prays in the words of David, pleading to God for help. Aleksandr's meekness is also described in the chapter which recounts how Aleksandr's father, Prince Yaroslav, did not have time to send reinforcements to his dear (*milyi*; also amiable, endearing) son.¹⁰⁸

If Aleksandr was presented as meek in his character, as a military leader he nevertheless did not act according to the example of Boris and Gleb; he did not let the king come into his country and take his lands, as Boris and Gleb did as they sacrificed themselves rather than resist their elder brother. Thus it cannot be claimed that Aleksandr actually had anything to do with the virtue that Boris and Gleb originally represented, i.e. brotherly love, *philadelphia*.¹⁰⁹ The Roman king of the Land of Midnight was not a brother, or any relative of his, but was clearly of foreign origin, so that Aleksandr's resistance was rightful. When Aleksandr calls on God to help him during the battle on the ice as He had helped Yaroslav against Svyatopolk, this indicates that his resistance was rightful and justified, just as it was rightful for Yaroslav to revenge the criminal fratricide. As Svyatopolk's first motive for killing his brothers had been lust for power, so Aleksandr's opponent, the Roman king, was poisoned with envy of Aleksandr's reputation. Bragging was also the motive of the Teutonic Knights in their conquest of Pskov.¹¹⁰ Thus Aleksandr's lack of guilt for the war is clearly established through his enemies' jealous thirst for power.

Aleksandr nevertheless committed an action that can be regarded as voluntary submission, when he rushed onto the battlefield outnumbered, without his father's regiments.¹¹¹ His entry into the battle

¹⁰⁸ *Povesti o zhitii*, 188.

¹⁰⁹ See Ingham 1984, 40–4.

¹¹⁰ *Povesti o zhitii*, 190.

¹¹¹ *Povesti o zhitii*, 188.

of the Neva with only his small regiments highlights two points, one earthly and the other hagiographic; the first being his personal physical valour, following the model of the heroes of Antiquity, and the second being his meekness and humility, which are expressed almost by way of sacrifice, by entering the battle after wiping the tears from his eyes and with only a small force. Thus the hagiographer once again provides evidence of his witty eye by combining the earthly and hagiographic ideals together quite brilliantly. Physical valour is excellently combined with innocence and humility in the image of Aleksandr.

Very little is known about the cult of Boris and Gleb in Novgorod during Aleksandr's lifetime, since speculations concerning its development are basically tied up with the *Life*. A. S. Khoroshev remarks that the cult of the martyr princes was strengthened during Aleksandr's reign by the efforts of Metropolitan Kirill.¹¹² He does not indicate where he derives this information from, but it is evidently related to Kirill's alleged role in the writing of the *Life*.

In his article on the Prussian *boyarstvo* of Novgorod and their *veche*-church, the Church of Boris and Gleb, V. L. Yanin attempted to demonstrate how three of the six brave men mentioned by name in the *Life* as participating in the Neva campaign were actually members of this Prussian *boyarstvo* in *Lyudin konets*.¹¹³ Thus Yanin followed Serebryanskiy in arguing that local conditions in Novgorod may actually have formed a relevant background to the description of the six brave men in the *Life*.¹¹⁴ The status of Boris and Gleb should be observed in a wider perspective in order to examine their role as a political manifestation of the local gentility of Novgorod from *Lyudin konets*, as Yanin suggested.

Taking into consideration the chronicle references to the cult of Boris and Gleb in Rostov, it can be presumed that this cult had at

¹¹² Khoroshev 1986, 84–6.

¹¹³ Yanin 1974, 88–93. It should be noted that these *kontsy*, or town districts, of Novgorod, had a certain measure of separate, local identity, together with various forms of self-government, among others their own *veche*, the district assembly. Yanin's term 'Prussian *boyarstvo*' refers to *boyars* who had their town estates along Prussian Street, one of the main streets of Old Novgorod. It should also be noted that it is unlikely that the name Prussian Street points to the origin of the district's population; rather it may indicate the direction of the continuing highway, linking Novgorod with the land of the Prussians, important trade partners who provided highly valued amber. Birnbaum 1981, 59–112.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Serebryanskiy 1915, 180.

the same time an important status in the areas that suffered badly from Mongol attacks, and that it was supported by the princely family of Rostov. As the contemporary chronicles testify, Aleksandr was on very good terms with both the Rostov princely family and the Bishop of Rostov, also named Kirill. Local chronicles from the Rostov-Vladimir area describe the event in 1259 when Great Prince Aleksandr came from Novgorod to pay his homage to Bishop Kirill and the princely family of Rostov. Aleksandr is described acknowledging Bishop Kirill's help—in all likelihood because when he had been seriously ill in 1251, he had recovered thanks to the bishop's prayers.¹¹⁵

The accounts in the chronicle of Great Prince Aleksandr's visit to Rostov tell of his good relationship with its princely family, for according to the chronicle passage, Aleksandr knelt not only before Bishop Kirill but also before the dowager Princess Marya, while the whole Rostov princely court, including Marya's sons Boris and Gleb Vasilovich treated Aleksandr with honour and love. After this warm encounter, Aleksandr entered Vladimir with great honour.¹¹⁶ The *Tverskoy sbornik* sheds more light on the purposes of this visit, stating that one of Aleksandr's motives for the Rostov visit was the donation of tithes (*desyatina*) to the church at Rostov, 'as was his custom'.¹¹⁷

Princess Marya of Rostov, daughter of the famous martyr prince Mikhail of Chernigov who had died at the hands of the Mongol khan in the Golden Horde of 1246, was the influential force behind the morals and spirit of the Russian princes, who suffered badly in wars with the new Mongol conquerors. Marya was a major factor in praising her father's memory, and paid great attention to the writing of the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov*.¹¹⁸ Her husband, Vasilko Konstantinovich, prince of Rostov, had died some years earlier, in 1238, when the Mongols took the city of Vladimir, and the story of his martyr's death was movingly depicted in the local chronicles. According to the Rostovian sources of the *Laurentian Chronicle*, Prince Vasilko had been slaughtered like an innocent lamb in the woods during the battle beside the River Sit in which the Mongols defeated the troops of the Great Prince Yuriy Vsevolodovich.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ *Lawrent'evskaya letopis'*, 202; *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 70; *Troitskaya letopis'*, 323.

¹¹⁶ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 71.

¹¹⁷ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 401.

¹¹⁸ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 283.

¹¹⁹ *Lawrent'evskaya letopis'*, 199.

As a staunch supporter of the fight against the Mongols, Princess Marya tried to keep the spirit of the combatants high. Presumably something of this was reflected in the necrology of Yuriy Vsevolodovich in the *Laurentian Chronicle*, which stated that a good battle was always better than a bad peace.¹²⁰ What could be a better cult for a woman in such a noble issue than the self-sacrificial example of martyrs? Obviously SS Boris and Gleb were in a central position in this historical situation, which demanded great sacrifices from princely families, defending their possessions in vain. It is of great significance that the sons of Marya and Vasilko were named as Boris and Gleb. The *Laurentian Chronicle* also states that a church dedicated to Boris and Gleb was built in Rostov in 1253.¹²¹ This is a rare statement as such, for the *Laurentian Chronicle* gives very little information on churches which were built or burnt, in comparison with (for example) the *Novgorod I Chronicles* which tell us in great detail about the building of the city, although, as in the *Laurentian Chronicle*, the new churches mentioned tended to have some political relevance to the favourite cults of the princes of Vladimir.¹²² Aleksandr himself acknowledged the high position of the Church of Rostov, which nurtured the cult of Boris and Gleb. In placing the martyr brothers in central position as the heavenly protectors of Aleksandr, the writer of his *Life* was obviously searching for the deeper symbolism in his narration. Since there is no concrete information in the *Life* on the cult of SS Boris and Gleb in Novgorod, there is no reason to associate the miraculous vision of the martyr saints with the town of Novgorod or its boyars.

The martyr brothers also had a central role in Prince Aleksandr's second important battle. The description of the Battle on the Ice presented a parallel representation of the notion of an ideal prince rewarded by the divine host, as it formed a symmetrical passage to the description of the battle of the Neva. The author of the *Life* had a fine sense of motif duplication which played an essential part in the structure of his narration and excellently highlighted the thematic means by which the story was told, allowing him to exploit

¹²⁰ *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 200.

¹²¹ *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 202.

¹²² Vsevolod III, for example, is especially mentioned for erecting a church dedicated to Demetrius, his own patron saint, in Vladimir, just as Andrey Bogolyubskiy was keen on erecting churches to the Mother of God. *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 149–50, 184.

the narrative potentialities of explanation.¹²³ He structured the Battle on the Ice by showing how Aleksandr again confronted arrogant enemies who posed a threat to his chivalrous honour. In the first year after his victorious homecoming from the River Neva, Aleksandr is reported to have torn down the fortress of the army from the western lands, which had erected a castle in his *otechestvo*, land that he had received from his father:

The next year, after Aleksandr had returned in victory, the enemy again came from the western lands, and built a fortress in Aleksandr's *otechestvo*. The prince started a campaign immediately and tore the fortress down to its foundations. Some of the enemy were hanged, others were taken prisoner, and others were spared and set free, because he was more merciful than anyone else.¹²⁴

By referring to the lands belonging to the Novgorod estates as Aleksandr's *otechestvo*, the author clearly declares himself not to be of Novgorodian origin. Claiming dynastic inheritance from the Yaroslavich branch of the Vsevolodovichi in Novgorodian lands was unthinkable in a Novgorodian context, but understandable from a Vladimir-Suzdalian perspective. The author also chooses to be silent about the local events which took place in Novgorod after the Neva battle, or the internal problems in Novgorod which forced Aleksandr to leave the city and move with his whole household to his father's estates in Pereyasavl Zaleskiy soon after the victorious Neva campaign. Instead he continues the series of Aleksandr's martial exploits, by moving on straight away to the confrontations with the *Nemtsy* in Pskov during the winter of 1242:

During the winter of the third year after Aleksandr had defeated the king, he campaigned with a large army in the lands of the *Nemtsy*, in order to show them they should not brag, saying: 'Let us subdue the tribe of the Slovens.' Indeed, they seized the city of Pskov and appointed their own officers there. Aleksandr captured them, however, and liberated the city, destroying their country and taking an endless number of prisoners and cutting others to pieces. Thereafter several *Nemtsy* cities concluded a treaty among themselves and decided, 'Let us go and defeat Aleksandr and take him into our own hands!'¹²⁵

¹²³ Cf. Ryding 1971, 36–7.

¹²⁴ *Povesti o zhitii*, 190.

¹²⁵ *Povesti o zhitii*, 190.

Here we encounter the same motifs that were present in the arrogant boasting of the Roman king when he arrived at the Neva and threatened to conquer Aleksandr's lands, and the theme of the contemptuous enemy is again repeated. The author then quickly bypasses the historical events of the Teutonic conquest of Pskov, and is satisfied with a short reference to the capture of the city and the acts of Aleksandr in reclaiming it from the knights. All this was of significance as a prelude to the second great battle, which was still ahead.

The battle on Lake Peypus (*Chudskoe ozero*) took place when Aleksandr's scouts reported an approaching Teutonic army. Aleksandr drew up his regiments and the two armies met on the ice of the lake. The author mentions briefly how Aleksandr's father had sent his younger brother Andrey to help him, and how Aleksandr had many brave men in his army, as King David had once had. A short battle oration was then given, providing an opportunity for Aleksandr's men to swear their fidelity towards their prince:

Aleksandr's warriors were instilled with the spirit of courage because their hearts were like the hearts of lions, and they said: 'O our honourable prince, the time has come for us to sacrifice ourselves for our country.'¹²⁶

Just as Boris and Gleb were the heavenly protectors of Aleksandr in the battle of the Neva, their significance was again repeated in an elaborately narrated account of God's chosen side. The oldest version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* mentions that the victory on the ice was achieved with the help of SS Boris and Gleb and the Holy Wisdom, guardian of Novgorod, 'for whose sake the Novgorodians spilled their blood.'¹²⁷ When Aleksandr's troops and the Teutonic army had formed their lines, the battle exhortations were given. As Aleksandr's men were filled with martial spirit and swore their devout fidelity to their prince, Aleksandr said his final prayer before the battle:

And Prince Aleksandr raised his arms to heaven and said: 'Judge me, my God, help me in my discord with this proud people, and help me, my Lord, as you helped Moses to defeat the Amalek in ancient times,

¹²⁶ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 191.

¹²⁷ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis, starshii izvod*, 78. Later Pskov chronicles show their local respect for the Holy Trinity, described as assisting Aleksandr in the Pskov chronicles. See *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 13; *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 5, 21.

and as you helped my forefather, Yaroslav, against the accursed Svyatopolk.¹²⁸

The wars conducted by the Israelites against their enemies provided a *topos* for fighting on God's chosen side. The Amalekian war thus became a model for all subsequent wars. The Bible itself said that the war against Amalek was to be continued from generation to generation, and thus God's chosen people were in an allegorical sense always confronting Amalek. The Bible related the war between Israel and Amalek, which with God's help finally turned victorious for Israel. After the victory the Lord spoke to Moses about the symbolic significance of the war.

And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.' And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi (*The Lord is my banner*): For he said, because the Lord has sworn that he will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.¹²⁹

God's intervention in aid of His chosen side was demonstrated by a miracle. In the war against Amalek, God was on the side of the Israelites, as demonstrated by the fact that all the time that Moses, standing on a hill, kept his arms raised up, Israel prevailed, but when his arms became tired and he dropped them down, the forces of Amalek took the initiative. When Moses's comrades finally took to holding his arms up, Israel gained victory through this miraculous intervention. God left a state of eternal wrath between his chosen people and the forces of Amalek, however, symbolizing the fact that the faith of a righteous warrior was eternally to be tested by wars.

In Aleksandr's prayer before the Battle on the Ice, the Israelites' war against Amalek is likened to the battle between Yaroslav and his brother Svyatopolk in Alta River in 1019. As God had chosen Yaroslav to prevail over the accursed, fratricidal Svyatopolk, Aleksandr's prayer also indicates that his battle is ultimately that of a chosen people of God against accursed wrongdoers. Here the allusion is to the murder of Boris and Gleb and rightful vengeance for it. After Svyatopolk had killed his younger brothers Boris and Gleb, fierce battle ensued between him and Yaroslav, and several wars were fought with varying success on both sides. The *Primary Chronicle* gives

¹²⁸ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 191.

¹²⁹ Exod. 17:8–16.

a detailed description of the conflicts between the brothers, in which the battle of Alta was the decisive one which finally brought Yaroslav to power in Kiev. Yaroslav addressed a prayer to his deceased brothers, Boris and Gleb, to assist him to victory against their 'arrogant murderer',¹³⁰

Just as Yaroslav prayed before the battle of Alta, asking for God's help in avenging the murder of his innocent brothers, Aleksandr pleaded for God's help before the battle with the Teutonic Knights. The whole passage describing the battle on the ice of Lake Peypus is constructed using the account of the battle between Svyatopolk and Yaroslav in Alta in 1019 as its literary model, using its *topoi* of war literature, including visual emphasis on the blood spilt all over the battlefield.¹³¹ In the description of the battle of Alta in the *Primary Chronicle*, after Yaroslav's prayers, the brothers' armies confronted each other and a fierce battle arose:

It was Friday, and the sun was rising. The two armies clashed, and the battle became so merciless that the like of it had never before been seen in Rus'. The men fought hand to hand and slaughtered each other. Three times the forces clashed, so that blood was shed all over the ground.¹³²

The account of Aleksandr's battle on the ice uses exactly the same formal presentation as the *Primary Chronicle's* story of the Alta battle, placing emphasis on the horrendous slaughter and spilling of blood:

When the sun rose on Saturday, the two armies clashed. There was horrible bloodshed and such a noise from the breaking of lances and clanging of swords that one could think that the ice itself on the lake was breaking. The ice was covered with blood so that it could not be seen.¹³³

Just as Svyatopolk, tormented by the Devil, was forced to flee to Poland after his defeat in the battle of Alta, gaining no rest because he was 'forced to flee, chased by the wrath of God',¹³⁴ so the *Life* of Aleksandr places great emphasis on the furious escape of the fleeing enemy, who could not escape the rage of Aleksandr's warriors

¹³⁰ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 63.

¹³¹ The description of the battle of Alta is included in the 'Paremia' readings in honour of Boris and Gleb. See Fennell & Stokes 1974, 113.

¹³² *Povest' vremennykh let*, 63.

¹³³ *Povesti o zhitii*, 191.

¹³⁴ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 64.

wherever they turned. This escape was still connected with God's intervention, which, as noted above, was an important sign for His chosen side. The *Life* describes this sign as being given both at the Neva, where the angel of the Lord killed a countless number of the enemy, and also in the battle of Lake Peypus, where his heavenly host provided succour.¹³⁵

I heard of these events from an eyewitness, who told me that he saw God's host in the heavens coming to help Aleksandr. And so they were defeated with the help of God, and the enemy fled and were pursued and cut to pieces by Aleksandr's warriors, so that one could think the host was rushing through the sky and the enemy had no place to run for shelter. Thus God glorified Aleksandr here before all the regiments in the same way as Joshua, son of Nun, was glorified at Jericho. And those who had bragged: 'Let us take Aleksandr with our own hands' God placed in Aleksandr's hands. And there was nobody to resist him in the battle.¹³⁶

The miracle of the heavenly host, described through the statement of an eyewitness, *autopsia*, bears a striking resemblance to contemporary crusader legends concerning battles in the Holy Land, which relate how the heavenly warriors SS George, Demetrius and Mercurius aided the crusaders during the conquest of Antioch in 1098. The description given by the anonymous author of *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, a history of the First Crusade beginning with the Council of Clermont in 1095 and ending with the battle of Ascalon in 1099, is written in the same spirit of acknowledging God's help. Its anonymous author was himself a knight who participated in the crusade, writing the first nine books before he left Antioch in November 1098 and the last at Jerusalem around 1101.¹³⁷

The *Gesta* describes the actions of the crusading army in Antioch in 1098, and in particular their eight-month struggle for the citadel. The crusader army was starving and tired, until fresh hope was given by a report of visions which suggested that God was protecting them. A hermit called Peter had seen a vision in which St Andrew appeared to him and showed him a place where 'the lance with which our saviour Jesus Christ was pierced' was hidden. This vision, and especially the finding of the lance, naturally gave great encouragement

¹³⁵ *Povesti o zhitii*, 189–191.

¹³⁶ *Povesti o zhitii*, 191.

¹³⁷ Hill 1979, 9–38.

to the Frankish troops and inspired them to defeat the Muslim forces at the Great Battle of Antioch on 28 June 1098.¹³⁸ The *Gesta* attributes the victory to the intervention of the three warrior saints, who arrived from the mountains riding on their white horses:

Then also a countless host of men on white horses, whose banners were all white, appeared from the mountains. When our men saw this, they did not understand what was happening or who these men might be, until they realised that this was the succour sent by Christ, and the leaders were St George, St Mercurius and St Demetrius. This is quite true, for many of our men saw it.¹³⁹

In the battle of Lake Peypus, as in the battle of the Neva, another important divine intervention occurred, equal to the example of the crusading legends concerning the siege of Antioch. God sent His host to intervene on the side of the righteous in Aleksandr's campaign, as He had aided the crusading armies in the Holy Land, and the author of the *Life* was as eager to convince his readers of the authenticity of the vision of God's warriors, which was testified to by eyewitnesses, as the anonymous author of the *Gesta Hierosolimitanorum* had been. As St George assumed a prominent position among the military saints during the Crusades, it is no wonder that he was also depicted on the personal seals of Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich, as a crowned warrior riding on horseback and holding his sword on high—a very common motif in the seals of dukes and barons in medieval Europe. On the reverse St George is depicted killing a dragon.¹⁴⁰

After Richard the Lionheart promoted the cult of St George in his crusading army, the popularity of this saint as a patron of soldiers spread steadily in western Europe as well. St George in war armour was depicted on Byzantine coins during the reign of John II Komnenos

¹³⁸ *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, Liber IX; xxv.

¹³⁹ *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, Liber IX; xxix, 69. All the saints riding in white armour and on white horses were soldier saints, who might be expected to help a soldier in extremity. On the legends of God's miraculous interventions, see also the *Chanson d'Antioche*, 8. St George was honoured as a patron saint of knights, while St Mercurius and St Demetrius seem to have represented a Christianised version of Castor and Pollux. The Greek cult of the twin brothers was enthusiastically adopted in ancient Rome, where they were regarded as protectors of soldiers and the Roman cavalry. They were especially honoured in Rome because of their appearance at Lake Regillus, where they helped the Romans to gain victory. White horses were frequently associated with the twin Gods.

¹⁴⁰ Pashuto 1995. On medieval seals see Cherry 1991.

in the 12th century, and his position as a protector of soldiers in Russia can be traced back to the 11th century, when the first monasteries were built in his honour. Prince Yaroslav of Kiev, whose Christian name was Georgiy (abbreviated in Russian as Yuriy) honoured his patron saint by founding a monastery of St George in 1036 to celebrate victory over the *Polovtsy*, and by naming the city of Yur'ev after him. In addition, the Novgorod monastery of St George was founded at the beginning of the 12th century to commemorate victory over the Estonians (*Chud'*).¹⁴¹

The hagiographic *Life of Aleksandr Yaroslavich* not only presented its hero as the ideal of a Russian prince, using the form already well established by the princely necrologies in the chronicles, but also drew a significant parallel with the warrior fighting on God's chosen side. Stylistically, the author chose to present the enemies of Aleksandr as arrogant boasters who offended his chivalrous honour by threatening to conquer his lands. As Aleksandr rose to challenge these insults, he was likened to biblical heroes who demonstrated that God was on his side in the battles. The most important indicator of this theme, combining the battle of the Neva and the Battle on the Ice, consisted of references to the martyr saints Boris and Gleb.

¹⁴¹ Momarova 1993, 61–4. See also Farmer 1987, 177–8; Kazhdan & Shevchenko 1991, 834–5.

2. THE IMAGE OF A DEFENDER

2.1. *Defending the frontier*

The popular image of Prince Aleksandr is above all that of a defender; later he achieved his patriotic image as the ideal defender of the whole Russian nation, and in history books his historical role is connected to the defence of its people, religion and culture in the age of crusades, at the time when the so-called 'Catholic expansion' was directed towards Russia.¹ As shown in Part One, Chapter 1, the *Life* of Aleksandr depicts an ideal ruler whose Christian valour was demonstrated by miraculous acts, through which God showed his compassion for Aleksandr Yaroslavich. The two great battles were important instruments by which the narrator could demonstrate Aleksandr's military heroism and the reward that was granted him. This chapter approaches Aleksandr's image as a defender from three aspects: as a defender of the frontier; as a defender of dynastic interests, and as a defender of Orthodoxy. The central position in the *Life* of the battles of the Neva and on the ice first raises the question of the defence of the western borders of Novgorod and Pskov.

In the description of the battle of the Neva Aleksandr was paralleled with well known earthly and biblical heroes in his defence of Novgorod. If the battle of the Neva remained unknown in Swedish sources, this was not the case with the Battle on the Ice, which was lavishly reported by the opposing *Nemtsy* in their *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*. This also reported on the Yur'ev (Tartu, Dorpat) expedition of 1260, which is also mentioned in the *Life*, in which Aleksandr's son, Dmitriy, distinguished himself at the time when his father left for the Golden Horde.²

The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* is an interesting source, presenting images of Baltic wars during the years 1180–1290 from an opposing point of view to the Russian sources. It is a vernacular verse chronicle written in Middle High German, consisting of 12,017 lines

¹ Ramm 1959, 85–133; Pashuto 1968, 227–96; Shaskol'skiy 1978, 159–76; Preobrazhenskiy 1985, 90–106; Kirpichnikov 1996, 115–18.

² *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 7567–7768; cf. *Povesti o zhitii*, 193.

in rhyming couplets which relate the conquest of Livonia, its conversion to Christianity and the wars fought by two military monastic orders, the Brothers of the Sword and their successors from 1237 onwards, the Teutonic Knights, against local pagans and Orthodox Russians.³ The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* is estimated to have been completed soon after 1290, and can thus be regarded as approximately contemporary with the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*. This is of great interest, since it is a historical narration illuminating Russian accounts of the wars on the Pskov-Novgorod frontier. The repeated use of phrases such as 'I have heard' or 'I have read'—which the writer of the *Life* also uses—implies the incorporation of both oral and written sources, which is quite understandable, since the period covered in the chronicle reaches back some 110 years, far beyond the memory or personal experience of the author. These phrases also confirm the narrator's authority, as demanded by the rhetorical rules.

The *Rhymed Chronicle* represents the official literature of the Teutonic Order (*Deutschordensliteratur*).⁴ This order was founded in the Holy Land during the siege of Acre in 1189/90 and in 1225 was invited by Duke Konrad of Mazovia to fight the heathen Prussians on his northern frontier. The crusading movement had begun with the conquest of Jerusalem in 1099, but the theology and rhetoric of crusading was adopted in connection with the Baltic wars at the latest around the time of the Second Crusade in 1147, when Bernard of Clairvaux legitimised wars against the Wends as being equal to crusades to Jerusalem. Since the losses of Jerusalem and Acre, the idea of holy wars, *militia Christi*, had met with much criticism, and several military orders which had been involved in the conquest of the Holy Land found themselves in difficulties. Hence the purpose of the literature of the Teutonic Order was to maintain good morals among the knights and members of the order—it was primarily a tool for the education of the members and for the upholding of

³ Murray 2001, 235.

⁴ Traditionally three main genres have been associated with the literature of the Teutonic Order: Bible translations in verse form, especially the Books of Judith and Esther and the Deuterocanonic Books of the Maccabees; the lives of saints and other devotional literature, and lastly chronicles describing the order's wars in Prussia and Livonia. Most of these works were written during the second half of the 13th century and in the first third of the 14th century. The body of works connected with the order has come to be known collectively as the 'Literature of the Teutonic Knights', *Deutschordensdichtung*. Fisher 2001, 264–5.

internal discipline and morality. The chronicles were its final, and arguably its most important genre, since they were indisputably written by its members to the order's specifications.⁵ The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* served most of all as a history of the order, and was probably intended as much for external as for internal consumption.⁶

The later chronicles of the order in particular attempted to put forward justifications for its warfare, headed by Peter von Dusburg's Latin *Chronicon Terrae Prussiae* (completed in 1326) and its German translation. According to Mary Fisher's analysis, this was done in three ways: firstly, the literature of the Teutonic Order identified the knights with the Old Testament Jewish warrior Judas Maccabeus, who was an exemplar of the order; secondly, it restated Bernard of Clairvaux's definition of Christian chivalry, and thirdly, it exploited the order's role in the dissemination of the cult of the Virgin Mary in north-east Europe.⁷

As the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* considers the history of the Teutonic Order as a series of military expeditions, it is reasonable to take a look at the opposing view of events on the borders of Pskov—in depicting history through a series of war events, both the author of the *Life* of Aleksandr and the author of the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* shared the same military point of view. In order to establish the setting for both of these texts, it is first necessary to take a brief look at the formal context of the *Rhymed Chronicle*.

The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* begins with a short account of the Creation and the possibility of salvation offered to humankind. The author understands the Baltic wars as an integral part of a common crusading movement, and he refers to the apostles and messengers who spread the word of God after the death of our Lord:

I intend to say more of how God's goodness has sent Christianity into many lands to which no apostles came . . . I have told you about God's son and the maid Mary, my Lady, the heavenly queen, and how His heavenly wisdom spread Christianity far and wide in many lands. Now I will make known to you how Christianity came to *Niefland*, as I have learned from wise men.⁸

⁵ Fisher 2001, 261–8.

⁶ Murray 2001, 250.

⁷ Fisher 2001, 269–70, 275.

⁸ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 90–3, 113–23.

Although the *Chronicle* is merely a history of separate wars, a series of battle descriptions following one after another, the introduction claims more, that the chronicle is about how Christianity was brought to Livonia, an important notion when considering its interpretation of events, the meaning of these wars, and their justification in the minds of the audience.

The events preceding the Battle on the Ice in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* give a description of the last battle of the Brothers of the Sword against Lithuania, at Saule, which led to the total destruction of the order and the death of its master, Volquin. After the catastrophe at Saule, the Brothers of the Sword 'laid down their insignia at once and took up instead the black cross of the Teutonic Order',⁹ and accepted Brother Herman Balke as their master. As soon as Master Herman had put the internal politics of Livonia in order, he confronted his Russian neighbours who 'intended to rise up against Christendom as before.'¹⁰ Master Herman arrived in Dorpat (called Yur'ev in the Russian sources):

and brought with him many a swift warrior, both brave and excellently trained. The king's men came there with a courtly army; [Dorpat's] Bishop Herman was glad about this. Then with their army they set off joyfully into Russian territory. Things went very well with them. They came to a castle called Isborg, from which no Russians were allowed to escape alive. Anyone who resisted was taken prisoner or killed, and was heard crying and lamenting. A great outcry arose all over the land.¹¹

The expedition to Izborsk and Pskov was the first major war party after the incorporation of the Brothers of the Sword into the Teutonic Knights; the latter sent 50 of their selected men to Livonia with Master Herman Balke. By comparison with these glorious troops who 'travelled in a courtly fashion', the men of Pskov are treated as heathens and are depicted as grim, simple folk.¹² The fact that Russians had been fighting alongside the Brothers of the Sword before the catastrophe of Saule is totally bypassed at this point, as the former allies of the brethren have become their enemies. The conquest of Izborsk is depicted as a great victory for the knights, who fought heroically under Master Herman:

⁹ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2011–2013.

¹⁰ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2072–2074.

¹¹ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2079–2098.

¹² *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2099–2103.

The Brothers and the king's men attacked the Russians boldly. Bishop Herman was there as a hero with his army. A terrible battle ensued, in which the Germans inflicted deep wounds and the Russians suffered great distress. Eight hundred of them were slain.¹³

The *Life* of Aleksandr does not recall the triumph of the knights in Izborsk, but instead remembers how Aleksander destroyed another of their outposts, the castle of Kopor'e.¹⁴ Here, however, the author of the *Life* has omitted the local events reported in the *Novgorod I Chronicle* which testify that Aleksandr also had his opponents in Novgorod and Pskov. After the knights had occupied Izborsk, they had an easy entry into the city of Pskov, which opened its gates voluntarily to the Germans. The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* describes how the people of Pskov were tired of fighting and afraid of death after the loss of Izborsk, and with their king, Gerpolt, 'would willingly give castles and good lands into the hands of the Brothers, and allow the Master to be in charge of them. Thus the attack was called off.'¹⁵ The *Novgorod I Chronicle* describes how the *posadnik* of Pskov opened the gates to the *Nemtsy* without a fight,¹⁶ evidently in league with Prince Yaroslav Vladimirovich (King Gerpolt in the *Rhymed Chronicle*).

Yaroslav Vladimirovich and the Germans had their supporters in Novgorod, too. Soon after the triumphant homecoming from the Neva campaign, a 'great sedition' (*kramola veliya*) arose in the city, and Aleksandr was forced to leave together with his whole household.¹⁷ It was only after the Teutonic Knights had reached the vicinity of Novgorod, being only 30 *versts* from the city, at Kopor'e, that the townsmen turned to Prince Yaroslav Vsevolodovich and pleaded for his son Aleksandr to come back and protect the city against the Germans.¹⁸

¹³ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2113–2121.

¹⁴ *Povesti o zhitii*, 190.

¹⁵ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2159–2163. Anti Selart claimed that Yaroslav Vladimirovich, according to a document dated to 1248, had bestowed his land on the bishopric of Dorpat, and argued that this donation may have been made before the events of 1240, when Yaroslav supposedly claimed his father's princely throne in Pskov. No such document is to be found in *Liv-, Est- und Curländisches urkundenbuch*, vol. I. Document No 200, which Selart names as his source, was a letter of Innocent IV to the archbishop of Livonia, and makes no mention of any such donations. See Selart 2001, 165.

¹⁶ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 77.

¹⁷ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 78.

¹⁸ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 78.

As Beletskiy and Satyreva point out, there is no doubt that the events in Pskov in 1242 reflected a clash of interests, in which the main issue was control over the princely throne of Pskov. As far as the sources reveal, Pskov already had its own princely throne in the 12th century, although at the same time its status had been that of a 'little brother' to Novgorod. At the beginning of the 13th century there were two competing branches of the Ryurikovichi with aspirants to its throne. While the descendants of Rostislav Mstislavich from Smolensk were successful initially, the descendants of Vsevolod III Yur'evich from Vladimir contested the throne regularly from the 1220s onwards, as Yaroslav, the father of Aleksandr Nevskiy, stepped into the arena with his auxiliaries from Suzdal.¹⁹

It was not only Pskov that was an object of interest for the princes of both Smolensk and Suzdal but also the princely seat of Novgorod, and during the 1220s and 1230s Pskov often served as a stronghold for those opposing the rule of the prince of Suzdal in Novgorod. The princes of Smolensk had relatively good experiences of negotiations and alliances with the Brothers of the Sword, and they occasionally appealed to the Livonian Germans as an ally against the aspirants from the Vladimir-Suzdal area.²⁰ Beletskiy and Satyreva argue that the capture of the Teutonic Knights in Pskov in 1242 was one such occasion, on which Prince Yaroslav Vladimirovich of Smolensk brought a Teutonic force to Pskov in order to strengthen his legitimate position there against Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich of Suzdal.²¹

After their relatively easy entry into Pskov, the army of the knights 'rode joyfully away from there,'²² as the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* describes. They left only a small garrison in Pskov, with two knights in command. 'Two Brothers were left there, who with a small army of Germans were charged with taking care of the land. This turned out badly for them afterwards, and their rule lasted for only a short

¹⁹ Beletskiy & Satyreva 1995, 81–4.

²⁰ Beletskiy & Satyreva 1995, 83–4. Around the year 1212 Dietrich, brother of Bishop Albert von Buxhövdén of Riga, was married to a daughter of Vladimir Mstislavich of Pskov. Anti Selart in particular regards this as a sign of an alliance between Riga and Pskov, which made some joint campaigns against the Lithuanians at that time. This 'alliance' did not last long, however, since both the Germans and the Russians were interested in acquiring land in Livonia. See Selart 2001, 155–7.

²¹ Beletskiy & Satyreva 1995, 83–4.

²² *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verse 2172.

time',²³ the *Chronicle* reports. The arena was now free for the Russian hero to arrive, and the *Chronicle* describes this in the following terms:

There is a city in Russia called Novgorod, the king of which found out what had happened and came towards Pskov with many men. He arrived there with great might, having brought a host of Russians to free the people of Pskov. They were glad in their hearts for this. When he saw the Germans, he did not waste time. He banished the two Brothers, releasing them from their office of administrators, and drove away all their servants. None of the Germans remained there, so that the land was left to the Russians. This is what happened to the Brothers. If Pskov had been saved at that time, it would have benefited Christendom until the end of the world. It is a mistake if one does not secure good lands which one has occupied and is forced to lament their inevitable loss. The king of Novgorod returned.²⁴

Here we have the appearance on the scene of a certain unnamed king of Novgorod, who came with a great force and had no difficulty in removing the two knights from their office. This Russian prince is represented as the king of Novgorod, just as Prince Yaroslav Vladimirovich is referred to as the King Gerpolt of Pskov. The term 'king' obviously drew an appropriate analogy with the prominence of the Orthodox princes, or *knyazi*, of Russia for the German chronicler. The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* does not give the name of the prince of Novgorod, but at the time it was Aleksandr, whose position after the destruction of Kopor'e was once again secure in Novgorod.

Instead the chronicler treats Aleksandr Nevskiy in the next military confrontation as king of Suzdal, which gives the reader the impression that whoever the king of Novgorod was, he was not Aleksandr, who is introduced properly only in the next passage. The chronicler claims that after the Germans had been driven out from Pskov by a certain king of Novgorod, the next military campaign mounted by the Russians was launched on the command of King Alexander of Suzdal:

Soon after this, the following happened. A man by the name of Alexander who was king of a Russian city called Suzdal, which is large and spread out over a wide area, told his people to prepare for war. The Russians regretted their defeats and were soon ready. King Alexander rode out from Suzdal with many Russians.²⁵

²³ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2173–2177.

²⁴ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2178–2203.

²⁵ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2204–2215.

Actually, the troops from Suzdal were under the command of Aleksandr's brother Andrey, who was prince of Suzdal in 1242. He participated in the expedition together with Aleksandr, but since the *Chronicle* suggests that the campaign was led by one king only, the chronicler has evidently confused the two brothers with each other. Thus the Russian expedition to the lands of the knights depicted in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* is attributed only to Suzdal, excluding Novgorod from this event entirely, and the impression is given that its sole leader was Alexander, identified as king of Suzdal. As the *Laurentian Chronicle* ignores the interests of Novgorod, it too places strong emphasis on the campaign's origins in Suzdal, as it reports for the year 1242:

The Great Prince Yaroslav sent his son Andrey to Great Novgorod to help Aleksandr in the battle against the *Nemtsy*, and they defeated them on a lake beside the city of Pskov and took many prisoners. Andrey returned to his father with honour.²⁶

The author of the *Livonian Chronicle* gives some details of the battle, beginning with the conventional description of a glorious Russian army:

They carried countless bows and many a handsome coat of mail. Their banners were rich, and their helmets glistened brightly. They forced their way into the land of the knights with an army. The knights opposed them with a swift defence, but were outnumbered.²⁷

Such formulaic descriptions of a glorious army are lacking from the *Life* of Aleksandr, and are relatively rare in the war tales contained in Russian chronicles. Only the Galician princely chronicle emulated this literary pattern in some of its descriptions of Prince Daniil and his army.²⁸

The details provided of the gathering of the German troops are evidently aimed at demonstrating that they suffered from a lack of

²⁶ *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 201.

²⁷ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2216–2224

²⁸ Especially the description of the troops and armour of Prince Daniil in his military negotiations with the *Nemtsy* in 1252. The chronicler describes how Daniil's men were equipped with the finest armour obtainable from the Tatars, their horses were protected with facemasks and the men with suits of mail, and their fine weapons shone in the light of day. Daniil himself was outstandingly handsome in his outfit. His fine horse had a saddle embroidered with gold, his weapons were decorated with gold, his clothes were of the finest Greek material, with golden lace, and his boots were of green leather embroidered with gold. *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 320–1.

men, as the chronicler has already mentioned that the knights were outnumbered:

It was learned in Dorpat that King Alexander had come to the knights' land with troops and had plundered and burned. The bishop could not countenance this, and quickly ordered the men of the monastery to hurry to the army of the knights for defence against the Russians. They did as he ordered, and joined the army of the knights without hesitation. They had not brought enough men, however, and the army was too small, but they agreed to ride against the Russians.²⁹

According to both the *Novgorod I Chronicle* and the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, the events in Pskov consisted of three military campaigns. First, the great army of the best Teutonic Knights and men of the Danish king heroically captured Izborsk and caused Pskov to surrender without a fight. Secondly, after the great army had been sent home and only two knights were left in Pskov, Aleksandr had a relatively easy task in liberating Pskov with his troops from Novgorod. Thirdly, there was a large offensive from the Russian side in which troops from both Novgorod and Suzdal participated. The *Livonian Chronicle* stresses the strength of the Russian army, while the brethren's army was poor, consisting only of the bishop's men from a monastery in Dorpat and the outnumbered army of the knights, which was also far too small according to the chronicler. How did such an unbalanced confrontation turn out? The *Rhymed Chronicle* gives us some details of the battle:

The Russians had many archers, and shot the first round bravely at the king's men. Then the banner of the knights broke through the archers, and one could hear the swords ring and see helmets slashed. The dead on both sides fell down on the grass. The army of the knights was completely surrounded. The Russians were so numerous that sixty of them rode at each German. The knights put up a good defence, but in spite of this, they were struck down. Some men from Dorpat were fortunate in surviving the battle, but they were forced to flee. Twenty knights lay dead, and six were captured. King Alexander was glad that he had gained a victory like this. He returned home, but left as a payment a large number of valiant men who never again set out on a war expedition.³⁰

The question of formal battle descriptions was discussed in the previous chapter. The description of this event in the *Life* of Aleksandr

²⁹ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2225–2239.

³⁰ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 2241–2268.

gives no actual details of the battle, as it places more weight on Aleksandr's prayers, the heavenly miracle and the biblical models of the ideal warrior kings. The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* is somewhat richer in details, mentioning the Russian archers and the tactics and armour used. It also gives the numbers of knights killed or taken prisoner. A thorough description of the battle is given in the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, however, which relates how, after Aleksandr had liberated the city of Pskov, he and his men from Novgorod left for the lands of the *Chud* to fight against the *Nemtsy* together with his brother Andrey and troops from Suzdal. Having indulged in looting and ravaging during their campaign, the brothers found themselves faced with the joint forces of the *Chud* and *Nemtsy*, and they retired with their troops to Lake Peypus (*Chudskoe ozero*), where Aleksandr ordered his men into battle formation on the Ilmen, near the Crow-Stone. The *Chud* and *Nemtsy* took the offensive by attacking in wedge-shaped formation, and a great battle ensued. The *Novgorod I Chronicle* describes how:

The men of Novgorod spilt their blood there before God, the Holy Wisdom and the Holy Martyrs Boris and Gleb, and because of the mighty prayers of these great martyrs God favoured Aleksandr. The *Nemtsy* were beaten, and the *Chud* turned and fled, being chased for seven *versts* across the lake, all the way up to the shore of Subolitchkiy. Innumerable *Chud* were slain, together with 400 *Nemtsy*, and 50 of them were taken prisoner and transported to Novgorod.³¹

The account given in the *Novgorod I Chronicle* is usually taken as being the most trustworthy source, since it was in all probability based on local information regarding the events and places. Although the *Rhymed Chronicle* gives information on the Russian archers and the German attack that broke through their lines, there is still a great deal of formalism in its account, such as the notion of blood spilt on the grass, while the Russian description mentions that the blood coloured the ice of Lake Peypus.

The Pskov chronicles, because of their late origin, contain only very scanty descriptions of these events, which took place about one hundred years before any official chronicling in the city started. According to the *Pskov I Chronicle*:

³¹ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis, starshii izvod*, 78.

Prince Aleksandr came and defeated the *Nemtsy* in the city of Pskov and liberated Pskov from the godless *Nemtsy* with the help of the Holy Trinity. He fought with them on the ice, and God helped Aleksandr and the men of Novgorod and Pskov . . . This battle was waged on the first of April, and there was a great joy in Pskov.³²

The calculation of the number of participants has been an object of enthusiastic interest. Fennell was inclined to believe the numbers stated in the *Rhymed Chronicle* regarding the strength of the Teutonic army,³³ and his idea of the overestimated numbers in the *Novgorod I Chronicle* has recently been accepted by Russian scholars. A. N. Kirpichnikov, for example, was ready to abandon the wildest estimates put forward during the Cold War period, when the warriors on each side were assumed to have numbered from 10,000 to 17,000. However, while admitting that the battle took place on a smaller scale than previously claimed, he still insists that it was of epoch-making significance, in that it halted western incursion into Russian lands, not to mention the fact (extracted directly from the *Life*) that it caused the fame of Prince Aleksandr as a great military leader to spread throughout the world.³⁴

The reference to German prisoners was taken up with gleeful pleasure by the author of the *Life* of Aleksandr, as he gloated over the fate of the disgraced knights:

Aleksandr returned home with a celebrated victory. His regiments had taken large numbers of prisoners, and those who called themselves the knights of God were dragged barefoot behind the horses.³⁵

The hagiographer is not interested in giving tactical reports of the battle: he gives no details of the fight, no casualty numbers, and only the basic turn of events. The Battle on the Ice was in many ways different from the one fought beside a desolate tributary of the Neva, an occasion which was witnessed by no more than two Russian sources, the *Novgorod I Chronicle* and the *Life* of Aleksandr. Instead, the Battle on the Ice was not only noted in both the *Novgorod I Chronicle* and the *Laurentian Chronicle*, but it was also reported from the antagonists' point of view in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*. The descriptions of the battle reflect the interests of the different parties.

³² *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis*, 13.

³³ Fennell 1983, 105–6.

³⁴ Kirpichnikov 1994, 162–6. Kirpichnikov, *Dve velikikh bitvy* 1995, 29–41.

³⁵ *Povesti o zhizni*, 191.

It concerned not only the interests of Novgorod, but also those of its Baltic counterpart, the Teutonic Order, and its subsequent allies, the Estonians, or *Chud*, as the Russian chronicles call the latter. But most of all, it was a contest between two princely branches of the Ryurikovichi, the descendants of the Vladimir-Suzdal dynasty and the dynasty of Smolensk.

The image of the defender is the most obvious feature which we can distinguish from the *Life* of Aleksandr. The *Life* gives not only the counter-propaganda to the enemy's official chronicle but also, like the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, puts the battle into the context of Christian history. Both sides exaggerated the strength of their opponents, and gave fairly inaccurate descriptions of the battle itself. But the Battle on the Ice was definitely of great significance, and it was a recognized victory for Prince Aleksandr. He was the liberator of Pskov, which the contemporary literature well knew, but as he moved in triumph to the city, his image as given in the *Life* was expanded to much more than that. Essentially the victorious image of Aleksandr was harnessed to serve the loyalty of the Pskovians towards the dynasty of the Aleksandrovichi, which is the topic to be studied next.

2.2. *Defending the interests of the dynasty*

The victories on the frontier were also victories for the princely line of Vladimir-Suzdal in Novgorod and in Pskov. Aleksandr's triumphant return from the battlefield to the rejoicing city of Pskov as described in his *Life* highlights the aspects of his image as a defender. The author put a great deal of effort into this particular description, for not even Aleksandr's homecoming from the Neva in 1240 was presented as enthusiastically as this one:

When the prince approached the city of Pskov, the *igumeni* [abbots] and the priests in their vestments and with crosses, as well as the entire population, came to meet him, praising God and singing songs: 'O Lord, you once helped the meek David to defeat the foreigners, and now you have helped our devout Prince Aleksandr with the help of the Cross to liberate the city of Pskov from foreign hands.'

'O ignorant people of Pskov! If in the time of Aleksandr's grandchildren you should forget these things, you would be following the example of the Jews who were fed by God in the desert with manna and quails and who thereafter forgot their God who had delivered them from their labours in Egypt.' Since that time Aleksandr's name

has been glorified throughout all countries, as far as the Sea of Egypt, Mount Ararat, on both sides of the Sea of the Vikings, and all the way to Great Rome.³⁶

There is some disparity between the manuscripts of the First Edition of the *Life* as to whether the words addressed to the 'ignorant' people of the city are attributed directly to Aleksandr or are a comment by the author himself to his readers. In Begunov's reconstruction it is presented as an authorial comment to the people of Pskov, whereas Okhotnikova's version of the First Edition, for example, has Aleksandr himself issuing this portentous warning.³⁷

The words addressed to the citizens of Pskov given in the *Life* constitute the most important single event among the political actions of Aleksandr Yaroslavich reported in the Pskov chronicles. The oration is presented in all three Pskov chronicles. It is significant, however, that where the *Life* viewed it above all as a reminder to the people of Pskov that they should not forget the heroic deeds of Aleksandr, the passages in the Pskov chronicles for the year 1242 give it a much clearer identity as a declaration of the dynastic authority of the princely branch of Suzdal over the city, delivered personally by Aleksandr. The *Pskov I Chronicle* reports the events of 1242 as follows:

Prince Aleksandr came and defeated the *Nemtsy* in the city of Pskov and liberated the city from the godless *Nemtsy* with the help of the Holy Trinity. He fought with them on the ice, and God helped him and the men of Novgorod and Pskov... This battle was waged on the first of April, and there was great joy in Pskov. Prince Aleksandr said: 'O you men of Pskov, I will tell you: If someone of my kin coming after me escapes to you in the midst of his sorrows, or wants to settle in your city but you will not accept him and honour him, let those responsible be called the second Jews.'³⁸

The *Pskov II Chronicle* mentions Aleksandr in only one of its yearly accounts, that for 1242, where it describes the Battle on the Ice and the liberation of Pskov. The text is basically the same as in the *Pskov I Chronicle*, and again the warning issued by Aleksandr is given:

And he informed the people of Pskov of his authority: 'If someone of my kin coming after me seeks refuge from you in his misery and wants

³⁶ *Povesti o zhitii*, 191–2.

³⁷ Cf. *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo*, 434.

³⁸ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 13.

to settle among you and you will not accept him and honour him as you should pay respect to a prince, you will be as deceitful as the Jews who crucified Christ.³⁹

The *Pskov II Chronicle* account is indisputably indulging in ideological and political pathos, in order to assert the power of Aleksandr's descendants in Pskov. It is clear that after he had driven away from the city the Teutonic Knights, old allies of the princes of Smolensk, Aleksandr felt the need to confirm his authority there. This message is most in evidence in the passage cited above from the *Pskov II Chronicle*. The *Pskov II Chronicle* also contains an independent version of the *Life* of Aleksandr, which is presented at the beginning of the chronicle, before the yearly accounts begin. In the *Pskov II Chronicle* version of the *Life* (which can be classified in the First Edition group), Aleksandr's speech to the Pskovians follows the pattern of reminding the Pskovians not to forget his heroic defence.⁴⁰

Hence the actual chronicle passages of all the Pskov chronicles contain adaptations of the oration taken from the *Life*. This adaptation has changed the message of Aleksandr's speech to the Pskovians, in that it has been transformed into a manifestation of his kin dynasty's power. The concept of the authority of Aleksandr's kin is taken up again in the further information given on the arrival of Aleksandr's son Dmitriy into Pskov during the brotherly feud in the year 6801 (1294): 'The Great Prince Dmitriy Aleksandrovich escaped to Pskov, where he was welcomed with honour.'⁴¹ The involvement of Dmitriy Aleksandrovich in the writing of his father's *Life* thus becomes significantly highlighted.

Dmitriy's position as Aleksandr's heir is proclaimed in a short passage in the *Life* which elevates him as a successor by virtue of both his military success and the devotion of his troops. Just before his last visit to the Golden Horde, Aleksandr ordered his young son Dmitriy to carry out an expedition into the 'Western Lands':

In the meantime he sent his son Dmitriy against the Western Lands, and with him he sent all his regiments and many warriors from his own household, telling them: 'Serve my son as you would serve me, not sparing your life.' And Prince Dmitriy campaigned with this large army and conquered some of the lands of the *Nemtsy* and took the

³⁹ *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 21.

⁴⁰ *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 14.

⁴¹ *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 22.

city of Yur'ev, returning to Novgorod with many prisoners and a good booty.⁴²

The short reference to Dmitriy's campaign against Yur'ev has a significant role in the dating of the *Life* and the evaluation of its purposes and aims. Although the *Life* suggests that Dmitriy, who was then only nine or 10 years old, was nominally in command of the expedition, the commander-in-chief was more probably Aleksandr's brother Yaroslav Yaroslavich, and it was Aleksandr himself who signed the subsequent peace treaty with the Germans.⁴³ According to Begunov, the story of the Yur'ev campaign is a key element in the textual history of the *Life* of Aleksandr. He divided 12 of the 13 extant manuscripts of the First Edition into two types according to how they depict the Yur'ev campaign. Four of the 12 manuscripts state that Aleksandr sent his only son Dmitriy to the Western Lands,⁴⁴ while eight indicate that he sent his younger brother Yaroslav together with his son Dmitriy and the men of Novgorod on this western campaign.⁴⁵ The *Life* contained in the *Laurentian Chronicle* was omitted from this analysis, since it does not contain the Yur'ev description, its text being interrupted after the battle of the Neva.

M. Koluchchi has recently questioned Begunov's division of the textual schema into three branches, being irritated by the middle branch, the sole member of which is the fragmentary account of Aleksandr's *Life* in the *Laurentian Chronicle*. However, since the *Laurentian Chronicle* ends abruptly after the description of the battle of the Neva, it is obvious that Begunov had no option but to classify it separately. Also, since the *Laurentian Chronicle* bears textual similarities to both main branches, its placement in an intermediate position seems justifiable in Begunov's scheme. For some reason, Koluchchi nevertheless felt a need to include the *Life* of the *Laurentian Chronicle* in the 'pro-Yaroslav' branch, although it did not even include the description of the event. He did this solely on the basis of its alleged closer textual resemblance to 'pro-Yaroslav manuscripts', while he had to admit nevertheless that the *Life* of the *Laurentian Chronicle* had also

⁴² *Povesti o zhitiï*, 193.

⁴³ See Fennell 1983, 131.

⁴⁴ These four manuscripts are the fifteenth-century *Pskov II Chronicle*, the Uvarov manuscript from the third quarter of the 17th century, the Barsov manuscript from the end of the 16th or the beginning of the 17th century, and the Olonetskiy seminar manuscript from the second quarter of the 17th century.

⁴⁵ Begunov 1965, 17.

had a significant influence on the texts in the other category.⁴⁶ It is obvious that Koluchchi's criticism is not on a solid footing, but based on speculations.

The information given in the first branch—the alleged 'pro-Dmitriy' branch—comes closest to that of the *Rogozhskiy Chronicle*, which briefly states how Aleksandr sent the troops of Novgorod against Yur'ev under the leadership of his son Dmitriy.⁴⁷ The *Novgorod I Chronicle* provides more details of Dmitriy's Yur'ev campaign, for it states that Dmitriy was accompanied by a great host consisting of men from Novgorod supported by Prince Konstantin, Aleksandr's brother Yaroslav, and Tovtavi, the prince of Polotsk (of Lithuanian origin), together with 500 Lithuanians. The expedition went well, and the chronicle reports how the town of Yur'ev fell in the first attack and the Russians killed and burned many people, not sparing even the women and children, and came home safely with a great booty and numerous prisoners:

That year, in the autumn, a great host from Novgorod went with Prince Dmitriy Aleksandrovich to Yur'ev. Prince Konstantin, son-in-law to Aleksandr, together with his men, and Tovtavi, prince of Polotsk, with 500 men from Polotsk and Lithuania, were there as well, together with a countless number of men of Novgorod. God alone knows how many they were.⁴⁸

According to Begunov the first 'pro-Yaroslav' account can be found in the relatively late *Novgorod IV Chronicle*.⁴⁹ In the year 6770 (1262), it recounts the evil things that the Mongol tax collectors perpetrated in Russia and how they drove good Christians out of their homes. It also discusses the forced conscription imposed by the Mongols, when they commanded Russian units to assist them in the wars against the Arabs. The same year also witnessed the execution of a heretic called Zosima in the town of Yaroslavl. It then goes on:

That autumn Prince Yaroslav Yaroslavich and Dmitriy Aleksandrovich, together with their brother-in-law Konstantin, Tovtavi of Polotsk and the forces of Novgorod went to Yur'ev and stormed the city's three walls in one attack, defeating the *Nemtsy*, shooting the good men from

⁴⁶ Koluchchi 1997, 252–60.

⁴⁷ *Rogozhkiy letopisets*, 32.

⁴⁸ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 83; cf. *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *mladshii izvod*, 311–12.

⁴⁹ Begunov 1965, 19.

the city and killing Peter Myasnikovich. They themselves arrived back in Novgorod in good health and with much booty. Prince Aleksandr went to the Horde for a third time.⁵⁰

This passage in the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* does not put any significant emphasis on the leadership of the expedition. The 'pro-Yaroslav' emphasis can only be seen in the fact that Yaroslav's name appears before that of Dmitriy in the list of attendants. The *Novgorod I Chronicle* edition of 1423 saw the interpolation of the *Life* of Aleksandr into its yearly accounts, but entries were added only for the years 1240, 1242, 1246 and 1251. The chronicle account of the Yur'ev expedition in 1262 was independent from the tradition of the *Life*, and in the *Novgorod I Chronicle* the expedition is depicted in the younger version in the same way as in the older version.⁵¹ Since Dmitriy was mentioned before Yaroslav in the oldest version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, Begunov states that a change in the Yur'ev account in the *Life* of Aleksandr took place before the 1430s, when the compiler of the Second Edition took the emphasis on Yaroslav's role in the Yur'ev campaign tale from the *Novgorod IV Chronicle*. At the same time he claimed the emphasis on Yaroslav's role had already appeared in some of the manuscripts of the First Edition.⁵²

Begunov also claimed that some manuscripts showing the second type of the First Edition (i.e. the 'pro-Yaroslav' type) were the common source for the *Novgorod IV* and *Sophia I* chronicles, which Begunov calls the Novgorod-Sophia edition.⁵³ However, the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* and the *Sophia I Chronicle* differ in many ways from each other, especially when it comes to their adaptations of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*. This study will return to this issue during the examination of the later chronicle adaptations of the *Life* in Part Two.

However, since chronicles were compilations from several sources, the matter is not as simple as that. Begunov does not, for instance, separate the interpolations taken from the *Life* from other independent chronicle entries. The manuscript containing the Second Edition

⁵⁰ *Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'*, 39.

⁵¹ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', mladshii izvod*, 311–12. See Bobrov 2001, 89.

⁵² Begunov 1965, 19–20. Begunov argues quite confusingly that the change in the Yur'ev description had already taken place in the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, which is definitely not the case, and is not in harmony with what he had claimed earlier. Here we are confronted with Begunov's careless and confusing way of naming the different chronicle adaptations and editions.

⁵³ Begunov 1965, 19.

of the *Life* of Aleksandr, as published according to the sixteenth-century manuscript by Mansikka, omitted the Yur'ev expedition entirely,⁵⁴ for example, and it is thus erroneous to claim that the Second Edition consisted only of Yur'ev descriptions of the second type, since it seems that the Yur'ev expedition did not necessarily belong to that edition at all.

It is misleading to classify the information of the chronicle entries on the Yur'ev events as belonging to any specific type of the *Life* itself, especially since the late Novgorod chronicles mixed passages from the *Life* with other chronicle accounts. The passages which related events during Aleksandr's lifetime did not necessarily originally belong to his *Life* at all. In addition, the information about the Yur'ev expedition in the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* does not belong to the textual tradition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, but follows yearly chronicle accounts. Ultimately, the descriptions of the Yur'ev campaign in the *Novgorod IV* and *Sophia I* chronicles should be regarded as independent chronicle entries. Some later editions of the *Life* included the chronicle information, as was the case in the so-called Likhachev Edition. The Likhachev Edition of the *Life* used the Second Edition as its source, but was much influenced by the independent entries in the *Sophia I Chronicle*. Thus it presented the Yur'ev expedition with its 'pro-Yaroslav' emphasis.⁵⁵

Scholars have disagreed on whether the description of the Yur'ev campaign was already in the original text of the *Life* or whether it is a later insertion. Mansikka claimed that the Yur'ev episode was a later interpolation in the *Life*, adapted from the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, whereas Begunov concluded that it was already an integral part of the First Edition, having been included as a testament by Prince Aleksandr to his son and heir Dmitriy.⁵⁶ Certainly, if Begunov's hypothesis that the First Edition was produced during the succession dispute between Dmitriy and his brother Andrey in the years 1276–94 is correct, the Yur'ev campaign and Aleksandr's speech in which he exhorts his men to serve his son Dmitriy as faithfully and loyally as they would serve himself is fully understandable and logical. This would also make sense of Aleksandr's words stressing how important it was for the people of Pskov to give asylum to Aleksandr's descendants

⁵⁴ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 11–14.

⁵⁵ *Likhachevskaya redaktsiya*, 135.

⁵⁶ Mansikka (1913) 1984, 55; Begunov 1965, 20.

if they happened to be in need of it. This would conveniently match the events which took place in 1293, when Dmitriy's younger brother Andrey, backed up by Mongol forces, caused him to flee to Pskov, and it would logically lead to the conclusion that the *Life* of Aleksandr was addressed to the citizens of Pskov in the course of internal fraternal war, when Great Prince Dmitriy had a shortage of supporters.

The significance of the city of Pskov is obvious in the context of the narration of the *Life*. It is also significant that, apart from the *Laurentian Chronicle*, the only other two manuscripts containing the *Life* of Aleksandr which survive from before the 16th century originate from Pskov: the *Life* in the *Pskov II Chronicle* of 1486 and the Petschchora Monastery codex of texts dating from the end of the 15th century.⁵⁷ The former belongs to Begunov's first type, in which Dmitriy alone is mentioned as the leader of the Yur'ev campaign, and the latter to the second type, in which both Yaroslav and Dmitriy are identified as commanders of the Russian forces.⁵⁸

What were the reasons for the First Edition becoming divided in this way? Was it deliberate? Was the narrative of the Yur'ev expedition originally included in the *Life* at all? What is the significance of this difference in the description of the Yur'ev expedition? Why was the 'pro-Yaroslav' insertion made? Although Begunov took much trouble to distinguish the two types among the 13 manuscripts of the First Edition, he never explained what was the purpose of this juxtaposition of Yaroslav versus Dmitriy. He assumed that the 'pro-Yaroslav' type of the *Life* must have been written by the end of the 13th century, during the rivalry between Dmitriy and Andrey in the years 1276–94, presumably by proponents of Andrey.⁵⁹

This does not sound very convincing, however. Why should Andrey's scribe change only one small detail regarding the leader of the Yur'ev expedition and leave the political testament of Aleksandr, 'Serve my son Dmitriy as you would serve me', untouched? A greater role for Yaroslav Yaroslavich obviously has little to do with serving the interests of Andrey Aleksandrovich. That is why the speculation over the leadership of the Yur'ev campaign seems to have been overestimated. Hence there is no real reason to divide the First Edition of the *Life* into two types because of such a minor detail, all the more so since

⁵⁷ Begunov 1965, 16.

⁵⁸ Begunov 1965, 46–50.

⁵⁹ Begunov 1965, 20–1.

there is no motive for the 'pro-Yaroslav' insertion. The descendants of Yaroslav Yaroslavich never used the second type of the *Life* in their chronicles, although as Prince Yaroslav Yaroslavich was a founder of the princely dynasty of Tver, it would be only logical that the Yaroslav emphasis in the Yur'ev description should arise from his own descendants. The *Tver Chronicle* contains some adaptations from the *Life*, but not continuously until the coming of the Roman envoys to Novgorod. It has no references to the Yur'ev expedition, although it does give information on the Rakovor expedition some years later, in which both Dmitriy and Yaroslav Yaroslavich were involved.⁶⁰

Since the motivation for intentional insertion of the emphasis on Yaroslav Yaroslavich's role in the Yur'ev campaign is totally lacking, one cannot help wondering whether Begunov's textual grouping is really relevant. He himself acknowledged that the division of the First Edition into two types was not entirely successful, for there are also textual similarities between manuscripts in the two groups. Begunov noted, however, that the second type versions of the First Edition (the 'pro-Yaroslav' group) used a shortened account of the battle of the Neva and also a different kind of funeral description, with the exception of the *Pskov II Chronicle*, which depicts the battle of the Neva in the shortened version but otherwise follows the patterns of type one, naming Dmitriy alone as the leader of the Yur'ev campaign.⁶¹

There are other differences in the various manuscripts of the First Edition of the *Life*. The *Life* as presented in the *Pskov II Chronicle* left the miracle of the angel killing Swedes out of its narration, and also the presence of the six brave men in the battle of the Neva.⁶² Mansikka argued that the compiler of the *Pskov II Chronicle* simply abbreviated the content of the Neva story to give more space to local Pskov matters and to accentuate the significance of the victory on the ice,⁶³ while Serebryanskiy suggested that, despite its fifteenth-

⁶⁰ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 403. The *Simeonov Chronicle*, which does not contain a *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, is not interested in the affairs of Novgorod or its wars against the *Nemtsy*. The *Simeonov Chronicle* does not even report the death of Aleksandr, and pays very little attention to the rivalry between his sons. Its interest lay in Rostov. See *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 71–2.

⁶¹ *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 11–16. Cf. Begunov 1967, 50–1.

⁶² *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 11–16.

⁶³ Mansikka (1913) 1984, 52.

century date, the *Pskov II Chronicle* presents the version of the *Life* that comes closest to the original First Edition, i.e. even closer to the original than that preserved in the *Laurentian Chronicle*. He maintained that the parts of the *Life* which are lacking in the *Pskov II Chronicle* were later inventions composed in Novgorod and interpolated into the First Edition some time before 1377.⁶⁴

Regarding the funeral description, Begunov's first type of the First Edition includes the author's assertion that the events he has just described are the truth; he heard about them from his lord, Kirill, and from the cellarer Sevastyan. This is what led Begunov to accept the manuscript as being the original form: as he believed that the *Life* was created in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir, Sevastyan—the cellarer of the monastery—would have been an essential link in the formation of the legend among the brothers.⁶⁵

The funeral description in the *Life* was shortened in some of the second type variants of the First Edition, as the description of the miracle in which Aleksandr moved his hand to take the *dukhovnaya gramata* was cut, and simultaneously the reference to Sevastyan was omitted. According to Begunov, this change occurred sometime during the sixteenth century, when a copyist of the second type manuscript could not comprehend the miracle because, according to customary habit, schema monks were buried shrouded and therefore their hands were tied up.⁶⁶ Begunov's study on different manuscripts shows the pattern of how some textual changes or omissions originate, and how they move on by the hands of later copyists.

Begunov's textual observations give us some idea of the fluctuation to be found among the different copies of the *Life*. The significance for the content of the *Life* of whether Dmitriy took part in the 1262 campaign with or without his uncle, or whether Aleksandr was buried in the presence or absence of the cellarer Sevastyan, is another matter. It was easy enough for a copyist to regard a particular point as insignificant and leave it out of his story, or to insert Yaroslav into the Yur'ev expedition if he knew the *Novgorod I Chronicle* accounts in which Yaroslav was mentioned as participating together with the other princes. If it had really been significant as a political gesture

⁶⁴ Serebryanskiy 1915, 179–82; see Begunov 1967, 46–7.

⁶⁵ Begunov 1965, 52.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

to place Yaroslav first in the list of the princes involved in the raid, this would have been most clearly visible in the sources from Tver. Since this is not the case, these textual changes seem to have little or no motive behind them, and may well represent sporadic changes occurring in the hands of copyists. These details had little relevance for the story itself, which had everything to do with the image of the defender and ideal warrior Prince Aleksandr.

The battle descriptions in the *Life* are connected not only with the defence of the western borders of the Russian lands, but also with the defence of the power held by the descendants of Aleksandr Yaroslavich in Novgorod and Pskov. Dmitriy Aleksandrovich has the key role when we evaluate the motives of the writer of the *Life*. It is thus Prince Dmitriy to whom this study returns later, when examining the authorship of the *Life* in Part One, Chapter 3 in this part of the study. Before that, to make clear the narrative motivations of the author of the *Life*, another important aspect of Aleksandr's image should be examined, namely, his defence of the Orthodox faith, which is integral to his image as a saint. The next chapter deals with the image of Aleksandr as a defender of the faith, and the study comes closer to the puzzling question of who had the motivation to write his *Life*.

2.3. *Defending Orthodoxy*

The military exploits of Aleksandr Yaroslavich took the narration of the *Life* to the frontier, where the Baltic wars were waged during the crusades. The frontier was a zone in which different linguistic and ethnic groups met, and where different religions and differing denominations of Christianity confronted each other. The battle descriptions of the *Life*—especially that of the Battle on the Ice—broadened the depiction of warfare from the strictly chivalrous concept of defending one's honour to address questions such as the need to claim authority over the throne of Pskov. The suggestion that the young Prince Dmitriy may have had an impact on the message and aims of the narrative in the *Life* leads us to the question of the writer himself. What, ultimately, was the purpose of this account? In order to come closer to answering this question, the analysis of the narrative itself has to be continued. Aleksandr's dealings with both Khan Baty and the Roman Catholic pope bear witness to the turbulent

events of the era, when the Russian princes got into the middle of a complex net of diplomatic ties and plans in order to strengthen the protection of Christian Europe against the Mongol attack. It is this historical situation that the *Life* leads its readers into in its second part.

Just as the writer sought to present the single episodes in the war stories using dualism as a narrative device, so the entire composition of the *Life* can be seen to follow a bipartite structure. Many of the important narratives of the 12th century show bipartite form, and it appears to have been a standard structural device in the Middle Ages. It was common in heroic stories, and was used in works such as *Beowulf*, the *Song of Roland*, the *Nibelungenlied*, the *Story of Digenes Akrites*, *El Cid* and Chrétien de Troye's *Conte du Graal*, for example. Often the two parts constituted deliberately juxtaposed tableaux, as in the case of Gawain's mundane adventures contrasted with those of Perceval, of the ethical and religious spirit in Chrétien's *Conte du Graal*, or the contrast of Beowulf's youth and age, first achievement and final death.⁶⁷ In the *Life* of Aleksandr too, the narration is clearly divided. After the section of war stories the writer turns to a totally different arena.

Where the first part of the *Life* is concerned with physical force, as manifested in Aleksandr's military exploits, the second part deals with the confrontation between East and West in the diplomatic arena. Here the narrative is again structured in terms of two balanced events: Aleksandr challenges representatives of both East and West as he deals with Khan Baty and with the envoys of the Roman pope. Following Aleksandr's last military exploits against the Lithuanians, the author makes a sudden transition into a totally new area, and begins a new subject:

In those times there was a certain powerful tsar in the Eastern Land, to whom God had subjected many peoples, from east to west. When this tsar heard of the fame and bravery of Aleksandr, he sent envoys to him saying: 'Aleksandr, do you know that God has allowed me to conquer many people? Are you the only one who does not submit to my power? If you want to preserve your land from destruction, come to me immediately and see the glory of my reign.'⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Ryding 1971, 25–7, 115–36; Beaton, 1989, 29.

⁶⁸ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 192.

Here again the author uses the biblical model that he had followed in his story of the battle of the Neva, for it was with exactly this attitude that the great Assyrian king Sennacherib threatened Hezekiah, wondering how he could think that God would rescue Jerusalem, since so many other lands had already been subjugated to Assyrian rule.⁶⁹ The eastern tsar threatened Aleksandr with a military campaign, just as Sennacherib was ready to capture Jerusalem. But while in the Bible Sennacherib's threats led Hezekiah to confront the Assyrian host on the battlefield, Aleksandr's actions led in a different direction.

The author of the *Life* treats the relationship between Khan Baty and Aleksandr in an almost chivalrous light, as the latter complies with Baty's wishes and visits the Golden Horde, gaining an appraising and honourable acceptance from the eastern tsar. The relationship is presented as one of mutual chivalrous admiration. Even though not expressed directly, domination by this eastern tsar is looked on as the will of God, a thing that did not need to be commented on any further. Not only was Aleksandr's arrival in Baty's court an impressive event to be feared among the 'Moabite' women and children,⁷⁰ but his manly and handsome appearance also made a stunning impression on Baty:

After the death of his father, Aleksandr arrived in the city of Vladimir with a powerful force. It was a redoubtable arrival and the news reached the very mouth of the Volga. The women of the Moabites began to frighten their children, saying: 'Prince Aleksandr is coming!' After some deliberation, Bishop Kirill blessed him, and he left for the Horde to meet the tsar. When the Tsar Baty saw him, he marvelled at him and said to his dignitaries: 'You were telling the truth, there is no other prince like Aleksandr!' And he respected him with honour and let him go.⁷¹

The author carefully hides the motives for Aleksandr's visits to the Horde, just as he also avoids referring to the mysterious death of Aleksandr's father on his way back to Vladimir from the Horde in 1246. Aleksandr's dealings with Khan Baty and the pope are often connected with each other, and the study of the diplomatic history

⁶⁹ 2 Kings 18:33–5.

⁷⁰ The Moabites were a biblical tribe of Semitic origin who lived in Palestine. Russians used this name to designate nomadic tribes, especially the Mongols. See Zenkovsky 1974, 232.

⁷¹ *Povesti o zhizni*, 192.

of the Russian princes has gained some scholars. Here the main concern is Aleksandr's role between East and West. As the *Life* begins the second part of its narration by describing the meeting of Khan Baty and Prince Aleksandr, it is necessary to make a brief survey of the historical situation of that time, and to examine the political situation of medieval Russia from a wider perspective. The diplomatic negotiations of the Russian princes with the West, and especially with the pope, are of great importance, at least as regards Aleksandr's image and his balancing act between the ambitions of the Catholic Church and the new Mongol lords.

The relationship between the Russian princes and Rome was thoroughly investigated by James J. Zatko, who noted in his article in 1958 that of the many unions between the Roman Church and the various eastern Churches, none has remained less well known than what he called the 'union of Suzdal', which he dated to the years 1222–52. Zatko traced the roots of this union back to 1222, with the arrival of the Dominican monk Hyacinth in Kiev, where he preached and built a Dominican priory dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.⁷² According to Zatko, the Russian princes actively sought help from the West, especially after the disaster on the River Kalka in 1223, and they were in touch with the envoy of Pope Honorius III, William of Modena, who had come to Livonia in 1225.

Zatko interpreted the pope's letters to the Russian princes as an indication that a union was on the way, and claimed that the princes had asked William to visit their country personally in order to instruct them in doctrine and to correct errors into which they had fallen on account of the lack of preachers. Only the death of Pope Honorius III in March 1227 prevented an agreement being reached with the Russian princes.⁷³ Zatko's interpretation of the sources was based only on Honorius's letters,⁷⁴ and no sources have survived in which any Russian princes request help in order to correct their religious failings. Thus Zatko's theory of the desire of the Russian princes to unite with the Catholic Church in 1227 is highly hypothetical.

The next pope, the dogmatic Gregory IX (1227–41), chose different methods in his dealings with the eastern Church. He quite straightforwardly ordered Yuriy of Vladimir to accept Latin rites and customs,

⁷² Zatko 1959, 33–4.

⁷³ Zatko 1959, 35.

⁷⁴ *Historica Russiae Monumenta*, vol. 1, 20–1.

and in 1232 denounced marriages between Catholic women and 'unbelieving' Russians. His intolerant, narrow-minded politics and ardent Latinism led to a reaction on the Russian side, and the Dominicans were expelled from Kiev in 1233 and from Suzdal in 1237. But however tense the relations between the eastern and western branches of the Christian Church may have been in the 1230s, the devastating Mongol attacks from 1238 onwards once again shifted the balance in favour of a coalition. As the Mongol vanguards were approaching the very gates of Vienna, news of this unexpected threat spread all over Europe and led Pope Gregory IX to authorise a crusade in 1241. The situation engendered an apocalyptic atmosphere, and Christians in both the West and the East considered the triumphant advance of the Mongols as God's retribution for the sins of Christians.⁷⁵

The problem of Church union entered a new stage during the reign of Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, when it became a strand of the extensive diplomacy practised by Innocent IV (1243–54). Innocent summoned a general Church council to meet at Lyons in June 1245 to consider the problems of the Church and of Europe, and to discuss the 'five wounds' afflicting the Church: the sins of the clergy and the spread of heresy; the aggression of the Saracens in the Holy Land; the schism of the Greeks; the inroads of the Mongols, and the anathema on Emperor Fredrick II. In order to establish diplomatic contacts with the Mongols, it was decided to send four separate embassies under papal guidance to meet the khan. One of the most authoritative of these embassies left Lyons in April 1245, led by a Franciscan monk, John Plano de Carpini. The Franciscan envoys travelled through eastern Europe and southern Russia to Khan Baty's encampment on the lower Volga. From there Plano de Carpini and his Slavonic interpreter, Benedict the Pole, were ordered to make their way to Karakorum, where they stayed for four months.⁷⁶ During this time de Carpini also held negotiations with Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, the results of which can be read in the letters of Pope Innocent IV to Prince Aleksandr.⁷⁷

At the beginning of the Mongol invasion, Pope Innocent IV also had close contacts with other Russian princes such as Daniil of

⁷⁵ On western European attitudes to the Mongols, see Ruotsala 2001.

⁷⁶ Ruotsala 2001, 40–1.

⁷⁷ The first letter, '*Pater futuri seculi*', is dated to January 1248, and the second, '*Aperuit Dominus oculos tuae*' to September 1248.

Galicia, and in 1246, at the very time when reunification of the Galician Church with that of Rome was being discussed, Innocent IV was also negotiating with Aleksandr's father, Prince Yaroslav of Vladimir. The pope also had hopes of bringing the Church of Vladimir-Suzdal into communion with Rome, and then of mobilizing the Teutonic Knights of Livonia and armies from Poland and Hungary for a crusade against the Mongols. Yaroslav was summoned to Karakorum late in 1246, and died on his way back from there.

After Yaroslav's death in 1246, Aleksandr at first hesitated to meet Khan Baty. Plano de Carpini mentions in his 'History of the Mongols' that Aleksandr refused to go to Baty to accept his inheritance from his father from the hands of a Mongol overlord.⁷⁸ Zatko argues that this refusal convinced Plano de Carpini that an anti-Mongol coalition was ready to take full effect. As Innocent IV's second letter shows, the pope obviously thought that Aleksandr was ready to accept the coalition.⁷⁹

Perhaps Prince Yaroslav was poisoned after the Mongols learned of his plans against them, but the sources do not reveal the real reasons and background leading to his death. An account from Plano de Carpini relates how Yaroslav was invited to the tent of the khan's mother, who served him food and drink with her own hands. Soon after that Yaroslav fell ill, and died on the seventh day, with his body turned dark and spotted.⁸⁰ The Galician princely chronicle also reports that Yaroslav was poisoned. In 1250 Prince Daniil is reported to have made a visit to Khan Baty, when he was met with honour and mutual respect. The chronicler, however, expressed his deepest resentment over the humiliating behaviour of Prince Daniil, who was forced to behave according to the pagan customs of the Mongols. In this connection, he remembered the evil of the Mongols and their bad deeds:

They poisoned Yaroslav, the Great Prince of Suzdal, with their herbs, and they slashed Mikhail of Chernigov and his boyar Fodor with their knives when they refused to bow to the bushes.⁸¹

All the extant sources indicate that the sons of Prince Yaroslav, Aleksandr and Andrey, continued the rapprochement with the West

⁷⁸ Giovanni di Pian di Carpine, 122.

⁷⁹ '*Aperuit Dominus oculos tuae*', 112.

⁸⁰ See Roshko 1988, 100.

⁸¹ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 314–15.

at first. On 22 January 1248 Pope Innocent IV sent a letter to 'The Noble Lord Alexander, Duke of Suzdal', in which he expressed his hope that Aleksandr would continue the negotiations to which his late father had been committed, and invited Aleksandr to join his army to that of the Teutonic Knights in order to form a shield against the Mongols, who were beginning to threaten the Christians.⁸² A day earlier he had sent a letter to Daniil, 'Famous King of Russia', in which he urged the latter to inform all the Teutonic Knights living in the regions of Russia about the alliance against the Mongols.⁸³ The day after sending Aleksandr's letter he sent one to the master of the Teutonic Knights to assure him that an alliance was under negotiation with Daniil and Aleksandr for a joint campaign against the enemies of all Christians. In this letter Pope Innocent IV urged all the Teutonic brothers in the Russian lands to be aware of the alliance which had been made against the Mongols, who were marching against Christendom.⁸⁴

Although Aleksandr's response to Pope Innocent IV's letter has not survived, it was obviously positive, for Innocent's second letter to Aleksandr, '*Aperuit Dominus oculos tuae*', reveals his reaction to the first call for unification.⁸⁵ This letter has been little studied and has been largely neglected in general historiography, with only a few exceptions.⁸⁶ Judging from its content, Aleksandr had earlier expressed his willingness to accept the Church union and to join the alliance against the Mongols, for Innocent IV congratulated him on returning to the Roman Church. Furthermore he asked Aleksandr to allow a Roman Catholic church to be built in Pskov, and recommended

⁸² '*Pater futuri seculi*', 68–9.

⁸³ *Historica Russiae Monimenta*, vol. I, 68.

⁸⁴ *Historica Russiae Monimenta*, vol. I, 70.

⁸⁵ '*Aperuit Dominus oculos tuae*', 109–11.

⁸⁶ Apparently the reason for neglecting Innocent IV's second letter is, that the letters have been located in different archives. Thus the letter '*Aperuit Dominus oculos tuae*' was not in the Vatican archives open to the use of A. I. Turgenev when, in the 1830s, he prepared his edition of Latin documents concerning Russian history, *Historica Russiae Monimenta*, but it survived in France, to where Napoleon had transferred part of the Vatican archives. See Lind 2001. However, several historians have been aware of the second letter and its content, such as Zatko 1957; Ramm 1959; Gorskiy 1994; Matuzova 1994; Gorskiy 1995. Roshko even published both letters with Russian translations. See Roshko 1988, 92–114. Other historians have either been silent on the letter's existence, or have not had information of its existence, such as Pashuto 1968; Pashuto (1975) 1995; Fennell 1983; Kirpichnikov 1996.

that he should receive the newly created archbishop of Prussia, Livonia and Estonia, Albert Saubeer, as a papal legate to visit him.⁸⁷

Aleksandr's negotiations were apparently interrupted when he and his brother Andrey travelled separately to meet Khan Baty in the middle of the contacts with the pope. Baty sent the brothers to Karakorum, where their dispute was to be resolved by the Great Khan Guyuk. It is even possible that Aleksandr received Innocent's first letter while he was staying at Karakorum.⁸⁸ Aleksandr and his brother Andrey finally entered the court of Guyuk in 1248, and after returning to Novgorod, Aleksandr seems to have changed his attitude towards the papal negotiations, now rejecting the union that, according to the pope's earlier letters, he had accepted. We have no sources which could enlighten Aleksandr's changed attitude, except for the *Life*, in which he refuses to accept the teachings of the pope's legates,⁸⁹ so we really cannot say anything about his motives. Actually, it is somewhat debatable whether we can entirely accept the incident as described in the *Life* as a historically significant indication of Aleksandr's policy towards the West. According to the *Saga of Håkon Håkonsson*, Aleksandr, still as prince of Novgorod, was dealing with the Catholic West in 1251 in order to create a dynastic link between his son and the daughter of the Norwegian King Håkon.⁹⁰ Although the marriage eventually came to nothing, John Lind suggests that the attempt confirms that Aleksandr was still engaged at that time in seeking opportunities to strengthen the papal alliance against the Mongol threat.⁹¹

It should be noted that, in all probability, it was not an alliance with either the pope or the khan which concerned Aleksandr most, but the internal quest for power among the Russian princes. After Yaroslav Vsevolodovich died in 1246, his brother Svyatoslav was next to accede to the throne. His rule was cut short, however, for

⁸⁷ 'Aperuit Dominus oculos tuas', 109–11.

⁸⁸ A. A. Gorskiy suggests that Aleksandr left on his trip to the Horde at the end of 1247. He returned to Novgorod only at the end of 1249. If Innocent had any answer from Aleksandr to his first letter before writing another in September 1248, Aleksandr must have been given it during his stay in Karakorum. Gorskiy 1994, 52; Gorskiy 1995, 67–8.

⁸⁹ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 193.

⁹⁰ The passage describing the embassy of King Alexander from Holmgård in the *Saga of Håkon Håkonsson* is translated into Russian by T. N. Jackson in *Svyatoy i blagovernnyy velikiy knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy* 1998, 19–20.

⁹¹ Lind 2001.

after only one year, in 1248, Aleksandr's younger brother Andrey claimed the throne for himself, probably with the aid of a military coup. As Andrey and Aleksandr were both travelling separately to the Golden Horde to meet Khan Baty, he summoned them to Karakorum, where Andrey was granted the title of Great Prince of Vladimir and Aleksandr the throne of the now desolated Kiev. The brothers returned from Karakorum in the winter of 1249, and Aleksandr went back to Novgorod. Soon after that Andrey concluded what has later been interpreted as an anti-Mongol alliance by marrying the daughter of Daniil of Galicia in the winter of 1250–51.⁹²

It was following the 'alliance' between Daniil and Andrey that the crisis broke out. Aleksandr returned to the Horde, and two punitive Mongol expeditions were sent out against the Russian princes, one against Daniil of Galicia and the other against Andrey of Suzdal. These events are usually interpreted as part of the rivalry between the brothers which finally broke out after Aleksandr decided to make an alliance with the Mongols in order to gain the throne of Vladimir for himself. When Aleksandr replaced his younger brother as Great Prince of Vladimir there began 'the years of humiliation and collaboration with the Mongols against his own people', as Zatko puts it.⁹³

The author of the *Life* of Aleksandr reveals nothing of the complicated relations between the sons of Yaroslav, Andrey and Aleksandr, in their mutual rivalry for legitimacy and power. In one short sentence the author reminds us of the punitive Mongol expedition and of Andrey's escape. In the narrative structure of the *Life*, the devastation of the cities gives Prince Aleksandr an opportunity to carry out his good deeds, as he rebuilds the towns which have been sacked and looted by the Mongols. The event is lavishly remembered in the *Life*, as it offers an opportunity to depict him as an ideal ruler, in accordance with what the author referred to as the words of Isaiah:

Later Tsar Baty became angry with Aleksandr's younger brother, Andrey, and sent his general, Nevruy, to sack the land of Suzdal. After Nevruy's invasion the Great Prince Aleksandr rebuilt the churches and the cities that had been destroyed and gathered the scattered people back to their homes. The Prophet Isaiah said of such princes: 'To be good for his country a prince should be according to the image of

⁹² Fennell 1983, 106–7.

⁹³ Zatko 1959, 51.

God, quiet, friendly, meek and peaceful, he should not seek wealth, he should not be alien to justness, he should administer justice to orphans and widows, he should like charity instead of gold, he should be good to his household and hospitable to those who come to him from foreign lands. God rewards such a prince already during his lifetime with His grace, for God wants to provide peace not only to His angels but also to men, whom He rewards generously with His grace, whom He teaches, and whom He provides with His grace already in this world.' And God endowed his land with wealth and glory and extended his years.⁹⁴

With this paucity of information the complicated relationship of rivalry between the brothers for the princely seat of Vladimir is pushed into the background, and the subsequent anti-Mongol uprising which involved many cities and several Russian princes, including Daniil of Galicia and Aleksandr's brother Andrey, is totally ignored in the *Life*. Instead, the author moves on to a new episode in which the envoys of the pope come to deliver a message to Aleksandr.⁹⁵

Once envoys of the pope came to him from great Rome saying: 'Our pope said the following: "I have heard that you are worthy and glorious and that your land is great. Therefore I send to you Galda and Gemont, two of the wisest men of my twelve cardinals, to give you the opportunity of hearing their teaching about Divine Law."' But Prince Aleksandr, after consulting with his wise men, answered him, saying:

From Adam to the flood; from the flood to the confounding of nations; from the confounding of nations to the birth of Abraham; from Abraham to the crossing of the Red Sea by the children of Israel; from the Exodus of the sons of Israel to the death of King David; from the beginning of the reign of Solomon to the time of the Emperor Augustus; from the beginning of the time of Augustus to the birth of Christ; from the birth of Christ to the Passion and Resurrection of Our Lord; from His Resurrection to His Ascension into heaven; from His Ascension into heaven to the reign of Constantine; from the beginning of the reign of Constantine to the First Council; from the First

⁹⁴ *Povesti o zhitii*, 192.

⁹⁵ Ramm gives the date of 8 February 1252 for the arrival of the delegation from the pope. The *Life* is the only source in which any information is given on this delegation, however, and it gives no specific date, not even the year of the consultations with Prince Aleksandr. Ramm himself cited the passage in the *Life* which reports the arrival of the pope's legates from a relatively late source, the *Sophia I Chronicle*, which gives the passage from the *Life* in the year 1251. See Ramm 1959, 167; *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 187.

Council to the Seventh Council; all these happenings we know well and we do not accept your teaching.⁹⁶

This is the famous episode which has been labelled as an anti-Catholic declaration in so many interpretations and which ultimately gave Aleksandr the significant and far-reaching epithet of a defender of the Orthodox faith.⁹⁷ It is notable that the passage seems to stand independent of the previous description of the relationship between Aleksandr, his brother Andrey, and Khan Baty. Since the image of Aleksandr as the defender of Orthodox faith is so solid and long-lived, something must be said about the abrupt manner of the *Life* in presenting the confrontation between the two forms of Christianity, and especially Aleksandr's brief, formal answer to the Roman envoys.

G. P. Fedotov paid attention to the poor theological explanation that Aleksandr gave in his *Life* to the envoys of the pope.⁹⁸ The mystical truths upon which Christian dogma is founded, the Incarnation and the Resurrection of Christ, are simply included in a chain of other historical facts. This gives the whole of history a religious meaning, without any distinction between sacred and profane, an interpretation that fits in well with the concrete, matter-of-fact concept of the past presented in the Russian chronicles, where theology was not a matter of intellectual dispute but was constantly linked with real life and historical events. Hence the medieval understanding of the state was also expressed with the aid of biblical symbolism. Because of the lack of rational and logical elements, ancient Russian theology was entirely historical. This explains much of the feeling for religious philosophy in the history presented in the pages of the chronicles, which was especially clearly illustrated in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*.

Aleksandr's formal answer to the pope's envoys bears a resemblance to medieval chronologies, the calendars of years from the Creation through the most important incidents in Christian history, as presented in some of the important chronicles, e.g. the *Primary Chronicle*. These chronologies had a tendency to point out how the history of Kiev and the Russian principalities was inseparably connected to that of the Christian world as a whole. Above all it was

⁹⁶ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 193.

⁹⁷ See especially Ramm 1959, 167; Vernadsky 1966, 148–9; Pashuto (1975) 1995, 112; Preobrazhenskiy 1985, 90–106; Kirpichnikov 1996, 117.

⁹⁸ Fedotov, vol. I, 1966, 382–3.

the Byzantine chronicles to which the Russian medieval authors looked and from which they derived their information, the two most important being those of Georgios Amartolos and Ioannes Malala. Parts of these were known to have been translated into Slavonic by the 11th century. It was the urge to systematise and arrange world history which led to the creation of a Russian *Chronology*, which used the Byzantine chronicles as its main sources. In the middle of the 13th century, an edition of the *Chronology* was written which used not only the Byzantine chronicles but also the Bible and historical narratives such as the *Aleksandriya* and Flavius's *History of the Jewish War* as its sources.⁹⁹

Historians often argue that Metropolitan Kirill, the head of the Russian Church, was responsible for the poor, formalistic answer given in the *Life* by Aleksandr and his wise men to the envoys of the Roman pope. It has even been claimed that the answer stated the opinion of the highest ecclesiastical rank in medieval Russia.¹⁰⁰ Kirill sought to engage the Mongols in discussion, but there is hardly anything exceptional in that. As the Byzantine Church and the Roman popes also sought contact with the Mongols, it is hardly correct to say that Kirill—the head of the Church of Russia—was a skilful diplomat who had a firm relationship with the Golden Horde, even if he had contact with the Mongols. In 1261 Metropolitan Kirill established a bishopric in Saray, the capital of the Golden Horde, but that hardly gives any justification for claims that the Russian Church looked eastwards rather than westwards,¹⁰¹ and it is certainly not proof of a choice in favour of an alliance with the khan rather than the pope.

When establishing their sovereignty over the Russian principalities, the Mongols left the Russian Church free of taxation, which is normally given as a reason for the Russian Church's favourable attitude towards the Mongols. The *Laurentian Chronicle* describes how members of the Church were specifically excluded from paying taxes:

⁹⁹ Tvorogov 1990, 36–8. The first extant Russian manuscript of the *Chronicle of Georgios Amartolos* is preserved from Tver around the year 1300, written on the orders of Mikhail Yaroslavich. Tvorogov, *Khronika Georgiya Amartola* 1987, 467–70. The biblical episode of the war of Hezekiah against Sennacherib is also described in the Byzantine *Chronicle of Georgios Amartolos*. Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 43.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, Begunov 1965, 59.

¹⁰¹ Argued by Fennell 1983, 113.

'The only ones they did not count were the abbots, the monks, the priests and the *kriloshane* (minor clergy), who look towards the Holy Mother of God and towards the Lord.'¹⁰² Fennell interprets this as follows: 'Under such circumstances the church could hardly be expected to do anything but afford Aleksandr all possible support in the pursuance of his pro-Tatar policy and to foster in his Life the image of him as the great champion of Orthodoxy in the face of papal aggression.'¹⁰³

Ramm described political development in Europe during those times using emotionally coloured terms such as 'the papal aggression' and 'western coalition' against the Russian principalities. These widely accepted views, which were eagerly adopted by Soviet historians during the Cold War years, cherished the image of Aleksandr as a skilful diplomat and a swift warrior. His actions were seen as logical and acceptable manoeuvres by a good patriot who was not only pursuing the interests of his hereditary patrimonies but also paving the way to future prosperity for the whole of Russia. According to this view, after Aleksandr Nevskiy had so successfully halted the Catholic movement eastward in his battles at the Neva and on Lake Peypus, the western alliance changed its tactics and began to negotiate.¹⁰⁴ The Mongol attack and the personal diplomatic skills of Innocent IV occupied a decisive position in this scheme. According to Ramm, Aleksandr suddenly changed his mind after so many years of searching for a military coalition, because by committing himself to Mongol sovereignty he saved his country from greater devastation. He simply saw that the Mongol oppression was too strong to resist.¹⁰⁵ As Pashuto expressed it: 'By stoutly defending the western borders and aiming to defeat the Horde in the east in the course of time, Aleksandr Yaroslavich, as a skilful fighter and statesman, pointed the way to political strength for Russia and the development on which the later rise of Moscow was based.'¹⁰⁶

The image of Aleksandr Nevskiy as a far-sighted statesman can be considered as one of the most prominent myths concerning his role in the historical development of Russia. As Aleksandr turned

¹⁰² *Lawrent'evskaya letopis'*, 474–5.

¹⁰³ Fennell 1983, 113.

¹⁰⁴ Ramm 1959, 159–60.

¹⁰⁵ Ramm 1959, 167.

¹⁰⁶ Pashuto 1975, 27.

down the offers made by the pope and accepted Mongol supremacy, he was looked on in Soviet and Russian historiography as a wise, far-sighted politician who saved his fatherland from devastation by Mongol raids. By submitting to the new rule from the steppes, he was able to concentrate on an enemy that posed a much greater threat to Russia and its freedom. Aleksandr's rejection of the alliance offered by the Catholic pope presented in his *Life* has been seen as a choice on behalf of the East. The influential emigré historian George Vernadsky in particular saw a deeper meaning in Aleksandr's 'choice': by choosing the East he saved the Russian soul. While he sacrificed his land to Mongol domination, he saved the nationally cherished Orthodox religion.¹⁰⁷

Not only Soviet historians but also western scholars have played their part in perpetuating this myth, as they too have repeated views adopted during the Cold War which underline how Russia has been hiding away in its shelters ever since the 13th century, arming itself against its ideological western enemy.¹⁰⁸ The nationally minded historiography which acquired deep roots in the 19th century has also met with criticism, however. Charles Halperin, for example, has pointed out how Vernadsky was unable to overcome the old historiographic tradition which combined moral values with nationally minded conservatism when he gave credit to Prince Aleksandr for his choice in favour of the Orthodox religion.¹⁰⁹

Walter Leitsch penetrated the myth of Aleksandr's role as a far-sighted leader who was preparing a way to the future rise of Russia, and criticised the way most scholars have spoken of Aleksandr Yaroslavich and his 'choice' as if he could have known beforehand how long the Mongol occupation of the Russian lands would last.¹¹⁰ Leitsch is obviously right in his criticism. It is easier for historians to see the great lines of historical development from their later perspective.

As Aleksandr's clumsy answer to the pope's envoys was borrowed from the *Chronology*, one can hardly see sophisticated theological debate in it. There are no sources indicating any participation by

¹⁰⁷ Vernadsky 1966, 148–9. See also Pashuto (1975) 1995, 112; Pashuto 1975, 27; Preobrazhenskiy 1985, 90–106; Kirpichnikov 1996, 115–18.

¹⁰⁸ See, for example, Bodin 1993, 55–7.

¹⁰⁹ Halperin 1985, 55–194. See Akimova 1991, 33–53.

¹¹⁰ Leitsch 1978, 202–16.

Metropolitan Kirill in the papal negotiations, since all the correspondence concerning the alliance against the Mongols was directed straight to the Russian princes, and was above all concerned with military alliance. What part the Russian metropolitan played in these active years of searching for a military coalition between eastern and western Christianity is not deducible from any contemporary sources. The passage in the *Life* cannot be interpreted as evidence that the metropolitan directed these 'negotiations', and there is no justification for the claims that Aleksandr's answer to the pope's legates can be explained as being a real part of the diplomatic correspondence of the time. On the other hand, in view of the unquestioned assumption that Metropolitan Kirill influenced the writing of the *Life*, the role of the Russian Church in the negotiations has been taken for granted in discussions among historians. Fuhrman argues that, regardless of whether Aleksandr's policy represented gifted statesmanship or plain opportunism, it had the support of the Russian Church, and Kirill was no doubt instrumental in leading the clergy in this direction.¹¹¹

The *Life* of Aleksandr cannot be regarded as a contemporary source describing the politics of Prince Aleksandr. It is a princely eulogy that describes contemporary events formalistically and according to already existing literary models, derived above all from the Holy Scriptures, in order to create an image of an ideal ruler. As the *Life* was to be regarded as a saint's life, it was, however, appropriate to present the hero of the hagiography as making an effort to defend the Orthodoxy of the Christian faith. Since he did not turn against the pagan Mongols, as one might think a pious Christian ruler would do, the author used Aleksandr's relationship with Rome to express how a just and pious prince turned down the teachings of the Catholic West as a paragon in the image of the defender of the true faith. However, Aleksandr's image as a defender of the faith ultimately pales, as his image as a staunch defender of the borders of Novgorod and Pskov triumphs in his *Life*.

¹¹¹ Fuhrmann 1976, 166.

3. THE QUEST FOR A GODLY RULER

3.1. *The alleged role of Metropolitan Kirill in the writing of the Life*

Balancing between the East and the West, as noted in the previous chapter, has been an important feature of the legend of Aleksandr Yaroslavich, and the subject has raised much speculation about the authorship of the *Life*. Not only Aleksandr's answer to the Roman envoys which followed the chronological list of the most important events in the history of the Christian Church, but also many of the medieval war tales (such as the medieval Russian version of the Alexander Romance, the *Aleksandriya*) were easily available from a single compilation of the *Chronology*.¹ According to studies by A. S. Orlov, the tale of Alexander the Great, the chronological list of Church history and the *Tale of Degeni* were written in a style similar to the fifteenth-century manuscript of the *Hypatian Chronicle*, indicating south Russian origin,² and their impact on war stories in southern Russia gave an impetus for more developed theories of the origins of the *Life* of Aleksandr.

The *Hypatian Chronicle* consists of three individual chronicles: the *Primary Chronicle*; the *Chronicle of Kïev* for the years 1119–1200, and the *Princely Chronicle of Galicia* from the years 1201–92.³ The *Princely Chronicle of Galicia* is unequalled in Russian chronicle writing on account of its colourful mode of expression, which emphasises honour in war and chivalric ideals. Its key figure is Prince Daniil Romanovich (c. 1200–64), whose military expeditions the chronicle describes eloquently and in great detail. The *Chronicle of Galicia* is an exception to the concise medieval Russian chronicles, not only because of its vivid descriptions, but also because of its form, which originally lacked references to years; these were only added later.⁴ Because

¹ Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 42.

² Orlov 1926, 93; Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 44. See Tvorogov 1990, 36–49; Tvorogov, *Khronika Georgiya Amartola* 1987, 467–70; Tvorogov, *Khronika Ionna Malaly* 1987, 471–4.

³ Likhacheva 1987, 235–40.

⁴ The scribe commented on this stylistic peculiarity as follows: 'The Chronologies report on all the things that happened in the past, sometimes running ahead of

of its focus on war tales, the chronicle has been one of the most important models of literary language for the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*. As the Galician *Princely Chronicle* has had an enormous influence on the theories of the authorship of the *Life*, it is unavoidably a subject that concerns the study of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image.

Little is known about the different aspects and layers of writing in the *Princely Chronicle of Galicia*. As it covers a period of almost one hundred years, it is likely that many people were involved in it. Nothing is known for sure about its writers. O. P. Likhacheva distinguished five stages in its writing, the first being the edition of 1246, the second part—the *Chronicle of Daniil*—being written from 1247–62 by Ioan, bishop of Kholm, and the third part, covering the years 1263–71, being the edition of Prince Vasilko Romanovich. The fourth part, covering the years 1272–89, was a chronicle of Prince Vladimir Vasilkovich, and was thought to have been written by Bishop Evgeniy of Vladimir (in Volynia). Finally, the last part covered the years 1289–91, the reign of Mstislav Danilovich.⁵

In 1947 Likhachev wrote a monograph *Russkie letopisi i ikh kul'-turno-istoricheskoe znachenie* (Russian chronicles and their cultural and historical significance), in which he formulated a theory of the authorship of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* which has enjoyed unquestioned authority ever since.⁶ In the same year he also published an article *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya v zhitii Aleksandra Nevskogo* (The literary tradition of Galicia in the Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy), in the TODRL series (*Trudy otдель drevnerusskoy literatury*), in which he presented in detail his stylistic observations on the *Life* that consolidated his theory of its authorship.⁷

Likhachev pointed out the similarities between the traditions of princely biographies in Galicia and Vladimir, which according to him deviated from the Kievan style of chronicle writing. From the common basis of Vladimirian and Galician traditions, he found a similar social structure of a strong boyar layer in society, which

time, and sometimes lagging behind. Wisdom is achieved only by reading. The years are not counted here, as they can be written in later, as the Syrians do it with their own Antiochian system according to Olympiades, or as the Greeks do according to the Roman way of counting leap years, or as Eusebios of Pamphylia and other chroniclers have done, from Adam to Christ. So the years will be written in later, after the text has been read.' *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 324.

⁵ Likhacheva 1981, 564–7.

⁶ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947.

⁷ Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947.

according to him formed an opposition to the autocratic leadership of the prince. Thus Likhachev argued that the princely chroniclers of both Vladimir (on the Klyazma) and Galicia had been seeking to strengthen the prince's prestige to correspond to the popular image of a ruler.⁸

Prince Daniil Romanovich (c. 1200–64) is the most outstanding figure among the heroes presented in the Galician chronicle, and it is above all the parts which describe his reign and war exploits which have been compared to the military tale presented in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*. With his surveys on the *Chronicle of Daniil* and its relationship to the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, Likhachev influenced ideas about the writer of the *Chronicle of Daniil* in a profound way, and his theories about the authorship of both sources have dominated the field ever since. His ideas were far-reaching, for they influenced assumptions about the writer of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* to a decisive extent.

Likhachev pointed out the similarities between Daniil's chronicle and the Byzantine imperial chronologies, written during the lifetime of an emperor, and concluded that the writing of the *Chronicle of Prince Daniil* had most probably started in the 1250s (after Daniil had been crowned king by the pope's envoys in 1253) as his personal chronicle, following the tradition of the Byzantine imperial chronicles.⁹ Likhachev argued that the manner of describing the prince, emphasising worldly virtues, brought Aleksandr's *Life* stylistically very close to the *Chronicle of Daniil*, as it highlighted many of the same values and details as the latter, such as the military career of the hero's father, the great fame of a swift warrior and the solemn admiration felt by Khan Baty for the prince. These similarities were both cursorily and incorrectly deduced, however. Likhachev made a major mistake in emphasising the role of the hero's father, as he found similarities between the *Chronicle of Daniil* and the *Life of Aleksandr*.¹⁰ The emphasis on Yaroslav's valour and Aleksandr's merit in walking in his footsteps was present only in later adaptations of the *Life*, e.g. its Second Edition,¹¹ while there was no emphasis on

⁸ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 247.

⁹ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 247–52. As the papal delegation had crowned Daniil as king of Russia, *Rex Russiae*, he was recognised as a fully-fledged monarch in the context of the western European feudal order. See Magocsi 1998, 120.

¹⁰ Likhachev, *Galitskaya litturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 48.

¹¹ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 13.

Yaroslav's fame in the original First Edition at all. Also, as noted in the previous chapter, the universal characteristics of an ideal prince were repeated not only in the *Chronicle of Daniil* and the *Life* of Aleksandr, but were common in medieval literature.

Likhachev found parallels between Aleksandr's arrival in Pskov and the arrival of Daniil and his brother Vasilko from their expedition with Polish troops against the heathen Latvians and Prussians in 1251.¹² Closer examination reveals, however, that one can hardly speak of stylistic origin, as the Galician *Chronicle* places great emphasis on a number of individual military actions in the field, and greatly praises joint Polish-Russian military valour. Daniil and Vasilko gained great advantages in this campaign, and the chronicler plainly states that the Christians were pleased with the success of their princes, whose honour they were eager to praise:

Daniil and Vasilko liberated many Christians from captivity, and they sang them songs of praise, for it was God who had helped them. They then returned to their own country with honour, following the path of their father, the great Roman, who had campaigned against the pagans like a lion in the ancient times, so that the *Polovtsy* had used his name to frighten their children.¹³

The detail in which both the citizens of Pskov in the *Life* of Aleksandr and the 'Christians' in the *Chronicle of Daniil* are shown singing songs of praise after a successful battle can hardly be evidence of the *Chronicle's* influence on the *Life*, since we are evidently speaking of a very common *topos*, the expression of joy at the homecoming of a triumphant warrior. Just as this comparison is unsuccessful, Likhachev's paralleling of the scene of the pope's envoys wanting to see Daniil in the Galician *Chronicle* with Andreash wanting to see Aleksandr in the *Life* is equally not a good one.¹⁴ The description in the *Chronicle of Daniil* is of a totally different character. The pope's envoys were eager to engage in political negotiations, and their aim of having Daniil crowned was based on the need for a joint alliance against the Mongols. They did not come to see a glorious ruler on the strength of rumours, as was the case in the *Life* of Aleksandr, in which Andreash arrived fabulously as the Queen of Sheba had once done to see Solomon. According to the *Chronicle*, Daniil himself was

¹² Likhachev, *Galitskaya liteturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 45.

¹³ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 318.

¹⁴ See Likhachev, *Galitskaya liteturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 45.

fully aware of the nature of his crowning as a political alliance and not as a display of pomp, as demonstrated by his apparent reluctance to accept the crown in the first place unless some material aid could be guaranteed in the war against the Mongols.¹⁵ Here the comparison between the two princely descriptions reveals a distinct difference; the one describes the earthbound and customary, while the other paints a legend of an ideal prince.

Likhachev's analogies between the war descriptions are equally unconvincing, since the specific formulae of war literature were in extensive use in the Russian chronicles. He presents some *topoi* of war tales, such as hurrying into battle with only a small detachment of men, prayers before battle, presentation of the troops, events in the war and lists of the fallen or of men who distinguished themselves in battle, and uses these as arguments for his theory of a common origin for the *Life* of Aleksandr and the *Chronicle of Daniil*.¹⁶ However, no actual passages or citations were borrowed from the *Chronicle of Daniil* for the *Life* of Aleksandr. The fact that war exploits occupy an important place in both these narratives led their writers to use the same kind of language and, partly, the same formulaic phrases as were customary in the war descriptions (*voïnskie povesti*) of medieval Russia.

Overall, the writer of the *Chronicle of Daniil*, unlike the writer of the *Life*, did not draw a parallel between biblical events and earthly ones. He did not seek biblical counterparts when describing battles, but merely told the military tale, writing about the atmosphere and political events at a markedly grassroots level. Thus it is extremely difficult to find great sinister figures among the enemies against whom Daniil fights. In one section there is very heroic presentation of a man in his opponent's regiment who shows great courage and intelligence on the battlefield, but who is captured and executed by Prince Daniil after the battle.¹⁷ The only exception concerns the description of the Mongols, who are presented as sinister by nature.¹⁸ Seeing the Mongols in an extremely negative light is a very important ideological point, on which the author of the *Life* and the Galician scribe who wrote the *Chronicle of Daniil* had opposing views.

¹⁵ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 330.

¹⁶ Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 45–6.

¹⁷ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 308–10.

¹⁸ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 312–14.

In addition to misinterpreting the occasional similarities in the formulae of war literature, Likhachev made a major mistake in drawing a parallel between the lyrical introduction to the *Chronicle of Daniil*—in which Daniil's father, Roman Mstislavich, is remembered—and the story of the downfall of the Russian lands (*Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli*). Likhachev presumed that the *Slovo* was an introduction to the *Life* of Aleksandr, just as the *Chronicle* had its lyrical introduction.¹⁹ There is good evidence, however, that the *Slovo* and the *Life* of Aleksandr were combined relatively late. Yuriy Begunov concluded in his major study of the *Slovo* in 1965 that the *Life* of Aleksandr was combined with the *Slovo* only in Pskov in the 1450s/1480s. The *Slovo* has survived in two manuscripts, dating from the 15th and 16th centuries, and both are attached to the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* as a kind of introduction.²⁰ The *Slovo* and the *Life* are written in totally different styles, however, although they both contain the same emphasis on the military honour and great fame of the warrior who was feared in neighbouring countries. In the *Slovo* this awesome prince was Vladimir Monomakh.²¹

Many scholars have found connections between the *Slovo* and the *Life* of Aleksandr. Mansikka interpreted the description of Aleksandr's death in the *Life* as a manifestation of the same feeling of disaster that can be found in the *Slovo*.²² Despite their occasional thematic similarities, these texts had distinct themes and ideas, represented different eras, and ultimately were written by different authors. While the story of the downfall of the Russian lands, although fragmentary, has a clear indication of the catastrophe that befell the Russian lands, there is no such negative emphasis in the *Life*, which is a eulogy to a glorious and victorious prince. Thus Begunov concluded that the two texts are contradictory in their message. Linguistic analysis reveals that both of them are old, and they date to the same century, but they also show some differences. The *Slovo* contains more words that are familiar from the spoken Slavic language (*staroslavianskiy*), while the *Life* in its strict hagiographic form is dependent on Church Slavonic.²³ Begunov's view of the separate origins of these texts has been generally accepted by many scholars.²⁴

¹⁹ Likhachev, *Galitskaya liteturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 41–2.

²⁰ Begunov 1965, 72–83.

²¹ *Slovo o pogibeli*, 130.

²² Mansikka (1913) 1984, 1–11.

²³ Begunov 1965, 66–83.

²⁴ See, for example, L. A. Dmitriev, *Slovo o pogibeli* 1987, 432.

Likhachev's 'stylistic similarities' between the *Chronicle* and the *Life* are not clarified in any way, and seem to be based only on few choices of words. The *Chronicle of Daniil* is, fundamentally, interested only in the business of warfare in the Galician princely family. It is vivid in its small details and its black, Spartan, military sense of humour, but above all, it is distinctly mundane and common in its description of the battles. Naturally Daniil was depicted as giving orations and prayers before battle, and his victories were often mentioned as having been achieved with the assistance of the saints and of God, as was typical of medieval literature. No actual miracles were, however, ever reported in the *Chronicle of Daniil* as taking place on the battlefield, underlining that victories were gained mostly because of the valour and personal skill of the warriors.²⁵

All in all, the aims of the *Chronicle of Daniil* and the *Life* of Aleksandr are quite different. While Prince Daniil is a glamorous prince who is described colourfully and in great detail, Aleksandr remains merely a vague ideal, as nothing of his personality is really revealed. Comparison of these descriptions provides no justification for the claim that they might have a common author, and indeed it is in many ways absurd to try to compare these texts at all. Where Daniil and his relatives are portrayed as men of flesh and blood, facing death with joyful and sarcastic apprehension, the image of Aleksandr is an iconic reflection of a prince, giving no actual details of his character. The accounts of the six brave men in the battle of the Neva have nothing of the vitality with which the *Chronicle* depicts its heroes.²⁶ The latter observes the engagements of the men of the princely family closely, and gives a vivid picture of the life of an aristocratic medieval warrior prince. It describes details such as Daniil's glamorous outfit and gives plenty of war scenes coloured by military humour, in which the insults and bloody events of the battlefield are described in an intense narrative style.²⁷

²⁵ In 1229 the Archangel Michael helped Daniil in his victory; in 1231 he is mentioned praying to God, the Mother of God, and the Archangel Michael before his campaign. In 1235 Daniil asks help of God and St Nicholas. On many occasions the chronicler states that victory does not come from people, but from God, as in 1249 and 1256. *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 274, 276, 286, 308, 336.

²⁶ In 1256 Daniil and his son Lev were on a campaign against the *Yatvyagi*. The campaign, described with vivid details of the organisation of Daniil's host, contains an exchange of words between Daniil and his son Lev. The chronicle describes vivid incidents from the combat with witty sarcasm. *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 337.

²⁷ See, for example, the passage describing the ecstasy that overcomes the young Lev, son of Daniil, after a long, bloody battle, which ends in victory and euphoric looting. *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 312.

According to Likhachev, the *Chronicle of Daniil* was begun in the 1250s, after Daniil had accepted the crown from the papal legates, but the first author soon finished his chronicle writing. Likhachev followed Cherepnin, who proposed that the chronicle had originally ended in 1256/7, based on the argument that Prince Daniil's role became less prominent after that date.²⁸ There is nothing in the content of the chronicle, however, to provide any justification for Likhachev's conclusions. There is no interruption in the description of the adventures of Daniil, his son Lev or his brother Vasilko after the years 1256–7. In addition, Daniil's death is reported in 1264, not in a grandiose style, but as a brief necrology that praises his life and compares it with that of Solomon.²⁹ Actually, the moderate description of Daniil's death fits in well with the down-to-earth style of the chronicle, in which the glory of men arises from action and personal valour rather than from formal eulogies or hagiographic embellishments. It continues even after Daniil's reign to be full of interesting princely descriptions, rich in details and original in its treatment of lively characters, such as the Lithuanian Mindaugas and his son, and of family tensions, such as those surrounding Vladimir Vasilkovich. Psychologically vivid portrayals of the characters of the princes of Galicia-Volynia also continue after Daniil.

Based on the colourful battle descriptions in the chronicle, Likhachev asserted that it was written by a close associate of Daniil. He sought to demonstrate in detail by means of references to the battles and war events that the writer must have been an eyewitness and a comrade-in-arms of Daniil, a widely read man who belonged to the prince's closest circle and military retinue.³⁰ As in Likhachev's scheme the first part of the *Chronicle of Daniil* must have been written by an eyewitness, it supposedly had a parallel in the *Life* of Aleksandr, which was similarly claimed to have been written by an eyewitness. The *Life*, however, was written by somebody who testified only to the events of the latter part of Aleksandr's life, the beginning and the battle descriptions being based on testimonies from other eyewitnesses and from Aleksandr himself,³¹ as stated in the text:

²⁸ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 257. See Cherepnin 1941, 232 ff.

²⁹ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 360–2.

³⁰ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 248–54.

³¹ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 262.

I, the unworthy and sinful servant of God, will try, despite my poor mind, to write the life of the holy Prince Aleksandr, son of Yaroslav and grandson of Vsevolod. I am glad to tell of his holy, noble and glorious life in the same way as I have heard it from my fathers in his household and as I myself, while living in his house, witnessed it in its more mature parts.³²

The *Life* of Aleksandr begins with a hagiographic representation of the humble writer of the story. Then, after the conventional introduction of representing himself as a well established author, the writer claims that everything that is told in the *Life* is true and based either on descriptions by eyewitnesses or witnessed directly by himself. Some scholars take this as a continuation of the old tradition of war tales (*druzhinnaya legenda*) which formed a background for stories about exalted heroes, like that on the bravery of the last pagan prince of Kiev, Svyatoslav Igor'evich, in the *Primary Chronicle*.³³ This can hardly be the case, since hagiographic lives of the saints were supposed to be based on the testimonies of eyewitnesses, and thus the reference to personal experience was an essential rhetorical device in the *Life*.

Likhachev concluded that the answer to what he called the stylistic similarities between the texts was the author, the person who started to write the *Chronicle of Daniil* and never finished it being the same person who eventually wrote the *Life* of Aleksandr. One man who would fit well into Likhachev's scheme was mentioned in the description of Aleksandr's funeral in the *Life*, where the author tells of the miracle that took place and states how 'I heard this from my lord, the metropolitan archbishop, and his cellarer, Sevastyan.'³⁴ Likhachev concluded that Metropolitan Kirill may not personally have been the author, but probably he commanded the writing to be done by one of his scribes.³⁵

Likhachev's theory is illogical at many points, as it contains numerous obscurities and contradictory ideas. One of the major peculiarities was his assumption that the aim of the *Chronicle of Daniil* was originally to celebrate the crowning of Daniil as king in 1253. In that case it is highly unlikely that an author who wrote the *Chronicle* to celebrate the alliance of Daniil and the pope later opposed it so

³² *Povesti o zhitiï*, 185.

³³ Pautkin 1988, 18–25.

³⁴ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 194.

³⁵ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 266; Likhachev, *Galitskaya liteturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 52.

much that he wrote an anti-Catholic pamphlet in the form of the *Life* of Aleksandr.

Regarding the writers of the various layers of the *Galician Princely Chronicle*, there is no indication of their identity in the text itself, as there are no clear stylistic changes or interruptions in the time period that the chronicle covers. Likhacheva follows Pashuto's assumption that the first part of the *Princely Chronicle* is the edition from the year 1246.³⁶

Likhachev's theory was ultimately based on M. D. Priselkov's evaluation that Metropolitan Kirill was the author of the *Princely Chronicle of Galicia*. This idea was derived from the chronicle itself, in which a *pechatnik* (keeper of the seal) by the name of Kirill is mentioned.³⁷ This scribe Kirill participated in Daniil's actions against the boyars, who were eager to set out against him in the power politics of Galicia in the 1240s.³⁸ Prince Daniil brought Galicia under his rule in 1238, after a protracted struggle with the boyars and certain nobles of Hungary, Poland and Lithuania. When the Mongols swept through southern Russia in late 1240, rival Russian princes joined with the Poles and Hungarians to seize parts of Daniil's realm, and some of Daniil's own boyars collaborated with them, or even concluded alliances with the Mongols. The Church in Galicia also rebelled, and many bishops joined the boyar opposition.³⁹

This is where the *pechatnik* Kirill comes onto the scene. After Daniil had returned from his search for military assistance in Hungary in 1241, he and his brother Vasilko sent their *pechatnik* Kirill with an army to Bakota to suppress the 'thievery' practised by 'dishonest boyars' there. Kirill delivered an austere reprimand to Prince Rostislav, which he boosted by bringing an infantry regiment with him. The chronicle refers respectfully to Kirill's actions, and recalls how 'Kirill held Bakota with wisdom and force, and Rostislav was forced to retire beyond the Dnepr.'⁴⁰ Finally, leading an army of 3,000 infantrymen and 300 cavalrymen, Kirill helped Prince Daniil to capture the city of Dyad'kov.⁴¹

³⁶ Likhacheva, *Letopis' Ipat'evskaya* 1981, 235–41; see also Likhacheva, *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'* 1981, 564–7.

³⁷ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 300.

³⁸ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 300. See Likhachev, *Galitskaya liteturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 50; Priselkov 1940, 104.

³⁹ Fuhrman 1976, 161.

⁴⁰ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 300.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Not only did Likhachev merge the identities of the scribe Kirill and Metropolitan Kirill, but he also found no reason to doubt Priselkov's claims that the future Metropolitan Kirill wrote the *Chronicle of Daniil*,⁴² although early in 1947 he had remarked in his *Russkie letopisi* that this chronicle was totally secular in style and had nothing religious in its conception of history, as it emphasised devoted loyalty towards the heroic Prince Daniil and chivalrous princely honour. Unlike other medieval Russian chronicles, probably written by clerics, the *Chronicle of Daniil* presented history as a chain of battles fought by the prince and his brave army.⁴³ However, in his article, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya v zhizni Aleksandra Nevskogo*, also published in 1947, he took it upon himself to penetrate deeper into the mutual origins of the *Chronicle* and the *Life*, and became totally convinced that the writer of the former was a cleric.⁴⁴

Likhachev's sudden re-estimation apparently arose from his urgent need to find an identity for the writer of the *Chronicle of Daniil*. As an argument in favour of the scribe Kirill's clerical background, Likhachev emphasised Kirill's involvement in the abovementioned military conflict, which in Likhachev's mind was now directed towards peaceful negotiations rather than the waging of war.⁴⁵ Thus the identity of the author of the *Chronicle of Daniil* had been adjusted from a comrade-in-arms with a military background to a peace-loving cleric, in order to fit Likhachev's theory of common identity with the writer of the *Life* of Aleksandr. Although not convincing, Likhachev's sketch apparently fulfilled the equally urgent need to find an author for the latter, which he regarded as an important historical document. Ever since the publication of his 1947 article, Likhachev's theory has had a deep influence on every attempt to study the background of Metropolitan Kirill, and it has established the image of Metropolitan Kirill as a man of many talents: chancellor, general, diplomat, chronicler and cleric, all in one and the same person.

Just as Likhachev presented the *pechatnik* Kirill as a scribe, or a chancellor,⁴⁶ Günther Stökl also concluded that Daniil's *pechatnik*

⁴² Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 49–50.

⁴³ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 253–4.

⁴⁴ Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 50.

⁴⁵ Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 50.

⁴⁶ Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 50.

exercised authority similar to that of 'chancellors' in Poland and Hungary.⁴⁷ Joseph Fuhrman claimed that Metropolitan Kirill 'was chancellor to Daniil, and also served the prince as a general and diplomat.'⁴⁸ Tvorogov also repeats the assumptions of Priselkov and Likhachev, as he presents Kirill as a man who broke with his previous master Daniil of Galicia and transferred his loyalty to Aleksandr Nevskiy, and claims that he is a possible author of the *Life* of Aleksandr.⁴⁹ Based on the identification of Metropolitan Kirill as a former chancellor of Prince Daniil, it was then established that at the time of the Mongol conquest Kirill at first supported the princes who planned to resist the Mongols, but afterwards eventually allied himself with those who were ready to follow the politics of accommodation.⁵⁰ This theory has given Metropolitan Kirill a key role in the history of Russian attitudes towards the Mongol occupation.

The identity of the *pechatnik* Kirill was under discussion even before Priselkov and Likhachev developed their theories. Makariy argued in his famous *Istoriya Russkoy tserkvi* of 1889 that the *pechatnik* Kirill and Metropolitan Kirill must have been different persons, since it was improbable that a *pechatnik* could move from the position of layman and soldier through all the ecclesiastical ranks necessary to end up as metropolitan in the course of three years, by 1242. Also, if the layman Kirill had become a monk, he would not have been able to continue using his secular name but would have had to take a new, monastic name.⁵¹ This is indeed a valuable argument, which has subsequently been bypassed and neglected in the later studies, which are totally blinded by Likhachev's authority as the 'grand old man' of Russian medieval literature. Instead, it seems that later theories rested on the assumption that Prince Daniil could have appointed whomsoever he wished as metropolitan of Kiev, no matter whether he was a layman or cleric, and that in early 1242 he chose his faithful *pechatnik*.⁵²

⁴⁷ Stökl was also convinced that this *pechatnik* Kirill was the same man as the later Metropolitan Kirill. Stökl 1966, 150–75.

⁴⁸ Fuhrman 1976, 161.

⁴⁹ Tvorogov, Kirill 1987, 225–6.

⁵⁰ Fuhrman 1976, 161.

⁵¹ Makariy 1889, 309; see also Golubinskiy 1906, 53, who put forward a similar argument.

⁵² See Fuhrman 1976, 162.

What do we actually know about Metropolitan Kirill, then? He has been much neglected by historians, in view of his important and influential position at the time of the Mongol conquest. We do not even know for sure whether he was Russian or Greek, since the notion of his Russian origin is largely based on the theory of his literary influence on the *Chronicle of Daniil* and the *Life* of Aleksandr. After the Mongols took Kiev in 1240, the Greek metropolitan of Kiev at that time, Iosif, disappeared. The chronicles say nothing of his fate during the storming of the city on 6 December, but it seems that the see in Kiev was left open. In all likelihood Prince Daniil, who at that time was the most influential among the princes of southern Russia, nominated a new metropolitan. We don't know exactly when this happened, but Metropolitan Kirill is mentioned in the *Chronicle of Daniil* by the year 1243, when it was reported that, escaping from the wrath of Khan Baty who had returned from his expedition to Hungary, Daniil took Metropolitan Kirill with him.⁵³

It is only in 1250, however, that the chronicle recalls that Metropolitan Kirill was the candidate proposed by Daniil and Vasilko for the position of metropolitan of Russia.⁵⁴ The chronicle describes how Kirill attended to diplomatic issues for Daniil, travelling to Hungary, where he negotiated with King Bela over the peace between the king and Daniil, sealed by the marriage of the former's daughter to Daniil's son Lev. According to the *Chronicle*, the king of Hungary promised to escort Kirill to the Greeks with great honour if he would help him to make a peace treaty.⁵⁵ The *Chronicle* gives no information about Kirill's later trip to Greece or his confirmation in his office, but reports only how he managed to fulfil the wishes of Bela, which led to another trip to Hungary in the same year, together with Prince Daniil and Lev, as the marriage was solemnised.⁵⁶

The contemporary sources do not reveal the circumstances of the choice of the Russian metropolitan during the 1240s. In 1243 the *Chronicle of Daniil* mentions Metropolitan Kirill for the first time, but in 1250 the same chronicle mentions Kirill who was at that time only a candidate of Prince Daniil's for the office of metropolitan. It does not reveal anything further of what happened to this metropolitan

⁵³ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 302.

⁵⁴ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 314.

⁵⁵ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 314.

⁵⁶ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 316.

and diplomat Kirill in his task of travelling to the Greeks to receive his confirmation from the patriarch of Constantinople. However, historians tend to present the choice of *pechatnik* Kirill for the office of metropolitan as obvious fact. Fennell, for example, claims as follows: 'Kirill, whose career started as Daniil of Volynia-Galicia's chancellor, was sent in 1246 by his sponsor Daniil to be consecrated as metropolitan of Kiev by the oecumenical patriarch. He spent three to five years in Nicea . . . and eventually returned not to south-west Russia but to the north where he remained for the last thirty years of his life as the firm supporter of Aleksandr in all his ventures.'⁵⁷ Fennell presents no sources to back up this widely accepted view on Kirill's career and his trip to Nicea.

Kirill's trip to Nicea is mentioned in Makariy's *Istoriya Russkoy tserkvi*, where he states that, after the seat of metropolitan was left open in 1240, Kirill was mentioned as metropolitan for the first time in 1243. Then he places the events with the king of Hungary in the year 1246, from which point Kirill is stated to have travelled to Nicea. The duration of his stay is uncertain, but he was back in Russia in 1250.⁵⁸ The obscure dating of the *Galician Princely Chronicle* creates mistakes in the counting of years, since the years were not originally included in the chronicle, but inserted later.

Obviously, Daniil's candidate was on a mission aimed at finding allies for the anti-Mongol coalition, since the Mongols were a mutual threat to both King Bela and Prince Daniil. Did Daniil's candidate continue his trip to the Greeks after a long session of diplomatic negotiations? It has been suggested that, following the treaty between Bela and Daniil, he continued his journey to Nicea, where Patriarch Manuel II had his residence during the Latin occupation. The *Laurentian Chronicle*, however, speaks of Kirill's presence in Russia in connection with his visit to Suzdal in the same year, 1250, when the *Galician Princely Chronicle* reports him as being on a diplomatic mission in Hungary. In the year 6758 (1250) Metropolitan Kirill was once again arranging dynastic links for Prince Daniil, by giving his blessing to the marriage of Daniil's daughter to the brother of Aleksandr Nevskiy, Prince Andrey Yaroslavich:

That year Metropolitan Kirill came to the land of Suzdal. That year Andrey Yaroslavich married the daughter of Daniil Romanovich, and

⁵⁷ Fennell 1983, 103.

⁵⁸ Makariy 1857–83, vol. 4, chp. 1.

the metropolitan crowned them in Vladimir . . . with Bishop Kirill, and there was a great joy.⁵⁹

As we can see, there is a missing piece in the information about Kirill's alleged consecration in Nicea, which does not match the information given in the chronicles. If we can trust the information given in the *Chronicle of Daniil*, and Metropolitan Kirill was on the mission in Hungary in 1250, there was no way he could have been in Vladimir during the same year, if he had visited the patriarch of Constantinople in Nicea after his successful task in Hungary. Other problems exist, if we take it that the Metropolitan Kirill mentioned in the *Laurentian Chronicle* is the same one mentioned as Daniil's candidate in the Galician *Chronicle*. Likhachev never explained how it was possible for Metropolitan Kirill to write the *Chronicle of Daniil* in 1256/7, the time that Likhachev estimated that the chronicle came to an end, if he had already abandoned Daniil and his pro-Catholic politics for good in 1250 and had transferred his loyalty and friendship to Aleksandr Nevskiy.⁶⁰ It is clear that the participation of Metropolitan Kirill in the writing of both the *Chronicle of Daniil* and the *Life* of Aleksandr can in no sense be proved by such loose and unconvincing arguments. To put it simply: there is no evidence to back the theory that Metropolitan Kirill wrote the *Chronicle of Daniil*.

The assumption of a change of sides by Metropolitan Kirill from the anti-Mongol coalition to the politics of accommodation is in many ways ambiguous and raises more questions than the prevailing sources can offer answers for. We have some letters of Aleksandr to which historians have referred to with varying degrees of enthusiasm when talking about his negotiations with Pope Innocent IV in the latter's search for an anti-Mongol coalition with the Russian princes. But what actually happened when Andrey was expelled in 1252 and the alleged politics of accommodation began? Does the *Life* of Aleksandr really reflect the views of Metropolitan Kirill in the way that has been suggested? Since the *Life* reveals nothing about Aleksandr's, and even less about the metropolitan's, relationship to a supposed coalition of Andrey and Prince Daniil, the answers are hard to get at.

⁵⁹ *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 202.

⁶⁰ For Likhachev's arguments regarding the date of the *Chronicle of Daniil*, see Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 256.

Even John Fennell, who is otherwise very careful when evaluating the patriotic image of Aleksandr Nevskiy conveyed in his *Life*, accepts the interpretation of the passage in which the Roman envoys come to meet him as confirming both the relationship of Aleksandr Nevskiy with Metropolitan Kirill and their mutual policies which favoured the Mongols and were directed against the Roman Catholic West.⁶¹ It is often stated that Aleksandr Nevskiy fostered and enjoyed the warm support of the Orthodox Church throughout his reign, and that his cooperation with Kirill was unflagging.⁶² Fuhrman refers to Aleksandr's politics of cooperation with the Mongols and states that, 'Whether Aleksandr's policy represented statesmanship or opportunism, the Russian church supported it, and Kirill was doubtless instrumental in leading the clergy in this direction.'⁶³

Actually, the sources do not reveal very much about the relationship between Aleksandr Yaroslavich and Metropolitan Kirill. The *Laurentian Chronicle* recalls how the latter came to the land of Suzdal in the autumn of 1250 and how he attended the wedding of Andrey Yaroslavich with the daughter of Daniil of Galicia in the same year. Kirill was accompanied by the respected bishop of Rostov, also named Kirill, and they are mentioned as travelling together to Novgorod the following year for the consecration of Archbishop Dalmat. During their stay in Novgorod Prince Aleksandr was stricken by a grave illness, and both Metropolitan Kirill and Bishop Kirill of Rostov helped him to recover by their prayers.⁶⁴ Aleksandr's gratitude to Bishop Kirill of Rostov was lavishly remembered in the *Simeonov Chronicle*.⁶⁵

In favour of their warm relationship, it is sometimes stated that it was Metropolitan Kirill who gave Aleksandr his blessing before his first visit to the Golden Horde, but this is a false citation or translation.⁶⁶ What the *Life* actually says is that it was Bishop Kirill of Rostov who blessed him:

⁶¹ Fennell 1983, 112–13.

⁶² On theories of the devout mutual understanding between Aleksandr and Kirill, see Fennell 1983, 112–13; Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 51; Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 265.

⁶³ Fuhrman 1976, 166.

⁶⁴ *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 202.

⁶⁵ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 71.

⁶⁶ See, for example, Zenkovsky 1974, 233.

Prince Aleksandr decided to go to the Horde to meet the tsar and Bishop Kirill blessed him.⁶⁷

As the bishopric of Vladimir suffered badly after the Mongol conquest and was left for decades without a bishop of its own, it was the bishop of Rostov who enjoyed great prestige in the neighbourhood.⁶⁸ According to the information in the *Simeonov Chronicle*, it seems that Aleksandr had a cordial relationship with Bishop Kirill of Rostov, as discussed in Chapter 1.3. However, Metropolitan Kirill played a great part in the *Life* of Aleksandr, because of his impressive speech after the prince's death:

Metropolitan Kirill said: 'My children, you should know that the sun of the land of Suzdal has set. There will never be another prince like him.' And the priests and deacons and monks, the poor and wealthy, and all the people said: 'This is the end of us!'⁶⁹

Metropolitan Kirill was present at Aleksandr's funeral, and together with the cellarer Sevastyan, he was the one who witnessed the miracle that happened during the ceremony.⁷⁰ This does not prove anything exceptional in the personal relationship between the great prince and the metropolitan, although the touching funeral description is often said to have reflected the personal feelings of Metropolitan Kirill.⁷¹ It is, once again, essential to bear in mind the function of the *Life* of Aleksandr, and how far we can consider it as a historical source. The touching funeral oration, like so many other sections of the *Life*, is part of a skilfully combined literary work, and therefore we cannot consider these examples as much more than literary forms of narration.

The myth of Aleksandr choosing between East and West, and his overemphasised choice between the Catholic and Orthodox faiths, have dominated conceptions of him as a historical figure and the message of his hagiographic *Life*. The close cooperation between Metropolitan Kirill and Aleksandr has been one of the most powerful assumptions involved in this myth. As already noted, the common

⁶⁷ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 192.

⁶⁸ Pashuto (1975) 1995, 103.

⁶⁹ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 194.

⁷⁰ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 194.

⁷¹ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 265; Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 51.

statement in scholarly discussion is that after Daniil of Galicia had 'abandoned the Orthodox faith', Metropolitan Kirill left him for good and allied himself with another prince, the Orthodox Aleksandr Nevskiy, never leaving his side from then on. Fuhrman argues that even if Kirill supported Daniil's rapprochement with Rome as late as 1251, 'it is indeed possible that after 1251 Kirill, now residing in Vladimir, grew increasingly hostile to Daniil's ecclesiastical policies. Churchmen at Vladimir might well have concluded during the late 1250s that Daniil was in the process of surrendering the independence of the Galichian-Volynian Church to Rome. Kirill might have been all the more disposed to draw this conclusion because during these years he was joined at Vladimir by a stream of clerics from Galichia and Volynia who were dissatisfied with what they considered to be the pro-papal policies of their prince.'⁷²

As we can see, Likhachev's theory of Kirill's alleged role in the writing of the *Life* has dominated the whole evaluation of the Russian metropolitan's politics. As far as we know, he was present at the wedding of Andrey and Daniil's daughter during the winter of 1250/1, but we know nothing about the duration of his stay. Was Kirill joined during his alleged long stay in Vladimir by a stream of clerics from Galicia? The existence of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* is hardly proof of that. The content and style of the *Life* are utterly and hopelessly poor and clumsy in comparison with the eloquent tradition of the *Chronicle* of Galicia, which continued to flourish for many decades after Kirill's alleged move to the north.

But what do we actually know about Kirill's stay in Vladimir? Likhachev argued that he stayed there permanently after his alleged cooperation with Aleksandr began in 1252,⁷³ while Begunov argued that he remained in Vladimir and lived in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir until 1274, after which he moved to Kiev.⁷⁴ With regard to the contemporary sources, however, we know very little about the exact duration of his visits to north-east Russia. It is only the late sixteenth-century *Book of Degrees* which informs us that after the destruction of Kiev, Metropolitan

⁷² Fuhrman 1976, 167.

⁷³ Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 51; See also Priselkov 1940, 104–05.

⁷⁴ Begunov 1965, 58–9.

Kirill came to Pereyaslavl Zaleskiy, where he stayed for the rest of his life.⁷⁵ The *Nikon Chronicle* did not even hint at him having lived in Pereyaslavl.⁷⁶

Kiev was sacked for the first time by the Mongols in 1240, but there were only a few towns that were left outside the Mongol conquest, and also Vladimir faced the Mongol raiders several times. The contemporary chronicles inform us only that Metropolitan Kirill was in Vladimir in 1250 during Andrey's wedding, in 1252 when he received Aleksandr as a great prince of Vladimir, and in 1255 at the burial of Konstantin Yaroslavich.⁷⁷ The next time he is mentioned as having been in Vladimir is in 1263, at Aleksandr's funeral.⁷⁸ Since the pages of the *Laurentian Chronicle* for 1263–83 have been lost, much local information about Vladimir during the last years of Metropolitan Kirill's life there is missing.

After Aleksandr's death, Kirill came north from Kiev in 1274 and again in 1280. The *Hypatian Chronicle* indicates that he left Kiev in 1274 to hold a council in Vladimir,⁷⁹ while the *Nikon Chronicle* tells us that in 1280 Kirill 'according to his habit left Kiev and travelled around the towns of all Russia.'⁸⁰ The *Chronicle of Tver* reveals that he died in Pereyaslavl Zaleskiy in 1280,⁸¹ and the same information is repeated in the *Simeonov Chronicle*, where it is stated that he died in Pereyaslavl on 7 December in the year 6788 (1280), the same year in which he arrived from Kiev.⁸² His successor, the Greek Maksim, was consecrated as metropolitan in Constantinople in 1283.

It is obvious that it is impossible from this information to reach the conclusion that Kirill stayed in Vladimir for the rest of his life after first arriving there to attend Andrey's wedding. Actually there

⁷⁵ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL 21:1, 288. Metropolitan Kirill is mentioned in the 9th degree, where it is stated that he lived in Pereyaslavl during the rule of Aleksandr's son Dmitriy.

⁷⁶ In 1250 Nikon describes how Metropolitan Kirill came from Kiev to Chernigov, from there to Rostov, and finally to Suzdal, and how everywhere he was greeted with honour. That year he was present at the wedding of Andrey and Daniil's daughter in Vladimir. *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL 10, 137.

⁷⁷ *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 202–3.

⁷⁸ See *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 206.

⁷⁹ *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 476.

⁸⁰ *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL 10, 157.

⁸¹ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 405.

⁸² *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 77.

is no proof that he permanently abandoned his see in Kiev at all. Vladimir was sacked and burned in 1238, and the sources cannot confirm anything about him moving his residence from Kiev. On the contrary, it is known that his body was taken to Kiev after his death, and that he was buried there.⁸³ The first metropolitan to be buried in Vladimir was his successor, Metropolitan Maksim, who was also the first metropolitan definitely known to have abandoned Kiev, moving his residence to Vladimir in 1299.⁸⁴

The scholarly tradition tends to see Metropolitan Kirill and his role in the politics of the Russian Church as being closely tied to his alleged cooperation with Aleksandr Nevskiy. How, then, is Kirill supposed in practice to have influenced the writing of the *Life*? After Likhachev had formed his theory of Kirill's role in the writing of both the *Chronicle* of Daniil and the *Life* of Aleksandr, the next great developer of this theory was Yuriy Begunov, who made an effort to explicate the details of how, when and where the *Life* of Aleksandr was written.

Like Likhachev, Begunov was also convinced of Kirill's involvement in the writing of the *Life*, because of his prominent role in the funeral oration. He concluded that the *Life* was written not in Novgorod or in Pskov, but in north-east Russia, probably in Vladimir, since its counting of the years referred to the style used in Vladimir, where a year began in September (*senyabrskiy god*), whereas in Novgorod it began in March (*martovskiy god*). Also, Aleksandr was referred to by the epithet 'sun of Suzdal'.⁸⁵ Begunov also pointed to the introduction, in which the author submitted himself to his work under the protection of the Mother of God and the saint Aleksandr, which made him conclude that the story must have been written in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God, where Aleksandr was buried.⁸⁶

Begunov concluded that the *Life* was essentially based on a popular legend that had originated in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir.⁸⁷ Upon beginning his story, the author offers a humble prayer to the Mother of God and to Saint

⁸³ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 77; *Troitskaya letopis'*, 338. See Tatishchev (1784) 1965, 55; Karamzin, 1842, vol. 4, 94.

⁸⁴ See for example Martin 1996, 146.

⁸⁵ Begunov 1965, 57–8.

⁸⁶ See Begunov 1965, 57–8.

⁸⁷ Begunov 1965, 58.

Aleksandr himself for strength for his half-witted mind,⁸⁸ and this would again indicate that the cult of Aleksandr Nevskiy was already well established; otherwise, this notion would be absurd. At the same time as he argued that Metropolitan Kirill had his residence permanently in Vladimir for the period 1250–74, Begunov also claimed that the metropolitan and his scribes were personally influencing the emergence of a cult of Prince Aleksandr, who was buried in the same monastery where the metropolitan had his residence at that time, according to Begunov's theory.⁸⁹

Begunov's theory has not met with any criticism, but has been taken for granted by the most respected scholars of medieval Russian history,⁹⁰ and thus Metropolitan Kirill's dominant role in the birth of the *Life* of Aleksandr has also been taken for granted. In this study the attempt has been made to demonstrate that the old theories should be re-evaluated, and in the next section the question of the authority of the *Life* is observed in the light of its image of Aleksandr, by searching for the ultimate motivation which urged the author to his task in depicting the ideal prince.

3.2. *Eulogy of a Christian ruler*

The essential element of the *Life* lay in its panegyric aspect. Funeral orations were integral parts of princely eulogies, given in the chronicle passages in the year when a prince died. Therefore, instead of regarding the *Life* of Aleksandr as an indication of Metropolitan Kirill's personal devotion, its image of an ideal prince should be studied in the context of the Russian medieval tradition of princely eulogies.

It is evident that the function which the *Life* serves is basically that of a princely eulogy. As such, the funeral lament at the end of the narration reveals its main essence, and forms a well balanced continuation of its hagiographic beginning. The last events of Aleksandr's *Life* were his departure for the Golden Horde and the military expedition of his son Dmitriy to Yur'ev. As the events in the Horde proved fatal for Aleksandr, the actual funeral lamentation

⁸⁸ *Povesti o zhizni*, 187.

⁸⁹ Begunov 1965, 58–9.

⁹⁰ See Fennell & Stokes 1974, 108–9; Fennell 1983, 103; Fuhrman 1976, 161–72.

begins after the story of how he fell sick in Gorodets on his way home:

O woe is me, poor man! How am I able to describe the passing of my lord? How is it possible not to lose my eyes together with my tears? How is it possible not to have a broken heart from my sorrow? A man can leave the house of his father, but cannot abandon the house of his good lord, and even if he had to, he should share the coffin with him.⁹¹

Next there is a short note on how Aleksandr became a monk on his deathbed and died on 11 November. After that follows the famous description of his burial:

Metropolitan Kirill said: 'My children, you should know that the sun of the land of Suzdal has set. There will never be another prince like him.' And the priests and deacons and monks, the poor and wealthy, and all the people said: 'This is the end of us!' His holy body was taken to the city of Vladimir. Metropolitan Archbishop Kirill, with the entire clergy, with the princes and boyars and the entire population, from youths to elders, met the body in Bogolyubovo with candles and censers. The people crowded around because everybody wanted to touch the honourable couch on which the holy body was lying. And there was crying and shedding of tears and such sighing as has never been before, so that even the earth quaked. On November 23rd, the day when the Holy Father Amphiloeus is remembered, his body was laid to rest in the Church of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God at the Great Abbey.⁹²

It is important to study the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* by searching for its symbolic medieval modes of expression. It is actually amazing how little it has been analysed, for up to now it has been subjected only to 'textual analysis', in which scholars have mainly been interested in the phraseology and the wordings of the various old manuscripts. No proper content analysis has been carried out to determine what the writer meant by his narrative, what purpose the details in the story served, or what the references to the Bible tell us about the narrative and its settings. The story has many dimensions, and the references to the Bible and other sacred literature should definitely be taken into account when considering its message and, ultimately, Aleksandr's role in the great struggle between good and evil. This

⁹¹ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 193.

⁹² *Povesti o zhitiï*, 194.

section concerns the basic essence of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, the quest for a godly ruler.

The function of a 'ruler' in medieval Russia was above all a matter of action, of peace and war. The upper stratum of the Rurikid military aristocracy had divided the Russian lands among themselves and assumed the duties of medieval noble lords, maintaining the family's hegemony in all the areas that it could occupy. In the family struggles for power the diverging branches often had clashes of interest, and certain towns were created as key strongholds in dynastic conflicts over respect and hegemony, e.g. Vladimir on the Klyazma for the Vsevolodovichi, Smolensk for the Rostislavichi, and Chernigov for the Olgovichi.⁹³

The aristocratic upper class of medieval Russian society developed a martial cult in which the hegemony and prestige of a particular ruling family was declared openly in the princely eulogies contained in medieval chronicles. These aristocratic cults were not merely harnessed for political use, but also became a means of securing the influence of Christian principles through sanctification of the rulers. The model for this royal sainthood originated in the Early Middle Ages, drawing elements from the Hellenistic and Antique traditions, pagan German traditions and the cult of the early Christian saints.⁹⁴

The *Life of Aleksandr* was interpolated into the *Laurentian Chronicle* in the year of Aleksandr's death, and thus occupied the traditional place for a princely eulogy.⁹⁵ The tradition of eulogies for deceased princes was by that time already very strong in the Russian chronicles, having been firmly established in the *Primary Chronicle*. They served as a good arena for dynastic demonstrations on behalf of the ruling elite, and the cults of ruling princes were directly descended from these. The chronicles give us numerous eulogies of princes who were not officially canonised or venerated in the liturgy of the Church, the earliest of these being connected with the Rurikovichi of Kiev, who brought Christianity to the Russian lands: Olga, Vladimir, Boris and Gleb.

Medieval Russian chronicle tradition offers many examples of presenting ideal rulers through their funeral eulogies. The *Hypatian Chronicle* describes in the warmest tones Prince Mstislav Rostislavich

⁹³ See Fennell 1983, 1–10.

⁹⁴ Klaniczay 1990, 80.

⁹⁵ *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 204.

Khrabryy (the Brave), who was asked to be prince of Novgorod, but died in 1180 after ruling for only six months. The eulogy to him, presented as a tribute from his devoted men of Novgorod, shows many similar features to the lament for the deceased Prince Aleksandr in his *Life*.⁹⁶ His body was carried to the church, where it was greeted with candles and hymns. Bishop Il'ya and all the *igumeni* were there to bless it, and 'the whole land of Novgorod mourned for him.'⁹⁷ The lament of the citizens of Novgorod for Prince Mstislav is interesting, for it contains several of the details which were given in the funeral description of the *Life* of Aleksandr, including the metaphor of the setting sun:

'We cannot, Our Lord, follow you to foreign lands any more, or bring pagan slaves to the lands of Novgorod . . . it would be better, Our Lord, for us to die with you, for you took so much trouble to ensure the freedom of Novgorod from the pagans, just as your grandfather Mstislav liberated us from all evils . . . Now, Our Lord, when we can no longer see you, it is as if the sun has set and we are left in our misery.' And so many of the citizens of Novgorod mourned for him, the strong and the gaunt, the poor and the rich, and the monks, for he was kind to all the lower people.⁹⁸

The *Princely Chronicle of Galicia* contains an even longer and more detailed lamentation, that for Vladimir Vasilkovich in 1288. Here, too, the death of a prince who led his people in the midst of their troubles is compared with the setting of the sun.⁹⁹ The metaphors of death can be seen in folk lamentations, e.g. in a widow's lament for her husband: 'My red sun has passed away. It has set behind the high mountains, behind the dark forest. It drew back behind the clouds, behind the eastern stars, and abandoned me, the hopeless one.'¹⁰⁰

The sun was evidently widely used as a symbol for a prince, for the *Lay of Igor's Campaign* (*Slovo o polku Igoreve*) also contains this metaphor: 'The sun is shining in the sky—Prince Igor in the Russian

⁹⁶ It is notable that this chronicle entry tells us nothing about the military failures of Mstislav Rostislavich. In 1177 he contested the grand princely throne of Vladimir with Vsevolod Yur'evich and lost the decisive battle near the city of Yur'ev, after which he fled to Novgorod. Cf. Tvorogov 1994, 33.

⁹⁷ *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 120–1.

⁹⁸ *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 121.

⁹⁹ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 408.

¹⁰⁰ See Adrianova-Perets 1947, 20–31.

land.¹⁰¹ Although the use of the sun as a metaphor has long roots in Russian literary history and folklore, it has deeper roots in pagan cults beyond the Christian hagiographic literature. *Sol invictus*, the invincible sun, was adapted to the Roman imperial ideology. Thus the symbol of the sun is more of an imperial than a saintly image, radiating earthly splendour and glory rather than humility and piety. However, Christ was also depicted as *Sol justitiae*, the sun of justice and redemption.¹⁰² Thus the famous speech of Metropolitan Kirill in which he compares Aleksandr's death to the setting of the sun should not be regarded as a sign of devout friendship and a firm relationship with the deceased, as Likhachev interpreted it,¹⁰³ but more as the repetition of a very old symbol of death which had a long tradition in princely lamentations.

The narrator of the *Life* of Aleksandr had a great need of a more elaborate lament on the occasion of Aleksandr's funeral, for his task was to write about his whole life and not merely his funeral. Obviously, it is because of this wider concept of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* that the author used more developed means of narration and placed several quotations in the mouths of Aleksandr's contemporaries, including the famous oration attributed to Metropolitan Kirill. Understandably, he needed a sense of narrative continuity and a firm storyline as he connected formalistic passages.

Since the *Life* of Aleksandr depicts the deeds of a saintly prince, the medieval tradition of the sanctity of power must inevitably be considered here. Kings had a very special relationship with God in the Bible, and the Christian concept of the duties of a ruler were rooted in this. Although the leaders of society in medieval Russia were not called kings, as was the case in western Europe, the same principles were apparently considered to apply to the princes of the Ryurikid family. The duty of a just prince was to rule according to virtuous precepts, and a good prince who did this sufficiently well would be rewarded by God through His grace. Ultimately, this forms the basic idea in the *Life*, as we have discussed previously. The author reveals this at the very beginning of his narrative:

¹⁰¹ *Slovo o polku Igoreve*, 386. See also *Slovo o polku Igoreve*, 374.

¹⁰² See Adrianova-Perets 1947, 20–31. Kazhdan 1991, 192; MacCoull 1991, 1924–5. Cf. Cherniavsky 1961, 22.

¹⁰³ Likhachev, *Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya* 1947, 51.

As the Prophet Isaiah says: 'Thus the Lord said: "I appoint the princes because they are sacred and I direct them."' This is really true, for without God's will, his [Aleksandr's] rule would not have existed.¹⁰⁴

This places the author of the *Life* of Aleksandr in agreement with medieval concepts of the duties of a Christian ruler. As early medieval sovereignty was not based on any well developed political doctrine but rather on moral instructions, it was personal obligation to a lord which bonded subjects together. Political power was synonymous with personal power, as early medieval political thought concentrated on the king's person. The kingdom was a family possession rather than a state, and was divided by the heirs after the king died. Thus, when speaking of political power, especially in the Early Middle Ages, the concept of royal authority was connected to the Church and the dynasty, so that it could not be conceptualised in political terms. Ultimately, a ruler was God's representative, and his moral duties were a consequence of this.¹⁰⁵

An enlightening example which comments on princely power in medieval Russia is contained in the *Trinity Chronicle*, in which the murder of Prince Andrey Bogolyubskiy is discussed:

As the Apostle Paul says: 'Every soul obeys the ruler, for rulers are established by God. In his earthly being, the tsar (*tsesar*) is like every man, but in his power he has the rank of God, said the great Chrysostom, and those who oppose the ruler oppose the law of God, for a prince does not carry his sword in vain, but he is the slave of God.'¹⁰⁶

The eulogy for Prince Andrey Bogolyubskiy, *Skazanie o ubien'i Andreeve*, is one of the most outstanding medieval princely descriptions, mostly because it demonstrates in an exceptionally straightforward way the God-given authority of a prince by condemning the royal murder. As Boris and Gleb became the most important saints in Russia because they were murdered by their brother in a family strife over royal power, Andrey Bogolyubskiy followed their path. Having been the victim of a political assassination, he was exalted to the rank of a martyr, although not officially canonised until the local cult concentrated in Vladimir gained formal recognition by order of Peter the Great in 1702.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 187.

¹⁰⁵ Nelson 1993, 126–7; Bagge 1987, 17.

¹⁰⁶ *Troitskaya letopis'*, 254.

¹⁰⁷ Cherniavsky 1961, 11. On the kenotic ideal in medieval Russia see Fedotov,

According to Cherniavsky, it was very much the medieval attitude towards the image of a Christian ruler which so profoundly shaped the attitude of the Russian people towards their princes, who were seen in a saintly light. The Christian ruler was a mediator between God and men and, like Christ, shared the attribute of a dual nature. A prince was depicted as mortal, like all men, in his humanity, but at the same time as a ruler who possessed the divine attributes of his princely nature. He was a man in his being, but God in his function,¹⁰⁸ as reflected both in the tale of the murder of Prince Andrey, and in the quotation from Isaiah in the *Life* of Aleksandr.

Cherniavsky suggests, like Fedotov, that in sanctifying their princes the medieval Russians were not following the example of their Byzantine teachers in Orthodox Christian dogma, but were rather expressing the continuity of an old cult of ancestor worship. This is obviously the key to understanding the tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church in neglecting official canonisation. The myth of saintly princes and princely saints was sufficiently comprehensive that one could expect virtually all Russian princes to be sheltered under its wings. Basically, in Russian popular tradition all princes who fulfilled the demands of ideal behaviour and a sense of sacrifice could be seen as saints, as true images of Christ, mediating between God and His people, both in life and in death.¹⁰⁹

As the cult of the saints was essentially the same in both the western Catholic and eastern Orthodox medieval traditions,¹¹⁰ it is the procedure of canonisation which requires some extra comment. Firstly, the whole concept of canonisation is inappropriate to the Orthodox tradition, since there did not even exist a word for this procedure. The eastern tradition for declaring a saint was obviously not as formal as that developed in the West under the supervision of papal officials. Basically, the saints were categorised into three celestial ranks. Above all the saints were Christ and his highly venerated Mother of God. The highest rank of saints then comprised the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets and the apostles of the New Testament. The next category included martyrs, who earned their

vol. I, 1966, 94–109. On the development of the cult of Andrey Bogolybskiy, see Hurwitz 1980. The eulogy of Prince Andrey has survived best in the *Hypatian Chronicle*. Serebryanskiy 1915, 142; see also Kolesov 1987, 365–7.

¹⁰⁸ Cherniavsky 1961, 11–29; see also Kantorowich 1957.

¹⁰⁹ Cherniavsky 1961, 29–32; see Fedotov, vol I, 1966, 78, 92.

¹¹⁰ Likhachev 1967, 160.

sanctity by their sufferings, and the third rank was for persons who showed an example of Christian behaviour by their personal endeavours during their lifetime.¹¹¹ At first the Christian saintly cults grew up spontaneously around local saints, martyrs or bishops, often in connection with the divine gift of miracles, either during their lifetime, or posthumously. In practice, a cult was established when a local bishop declared a feast day in memory of a saint, to be celebrated in the local church. No medieval document clarifying this procedure has survived.¹¹² In the case of Aleksandr Nevskiy, nothing is known of his cult until his official canonisation in 1547.

Aleksandr Yaroslavich, as presented in his hagiographic *Life*, is not a martyr but an active warrior, a glorious example of a defender of the faith, another popular myth applied to Russian princes. Aleksandr's *pro patria* image is that of a secular prince, with a light touch of a divine halo, based on his grace as a courageous and wise prince whose fame was awesome. Basically, everything that is divine in Aleksandr's saintly image has to do with the implication of God's grace bestowed on the ideal Christian ruler as discussed in Chapter 1.1. The author used another reference to the Holy Scriptures in his formulation of the ideal ruler:

The Prophet Isaiah said of such princes: 'To be good for his country a prince should be according to the image of God, quiet, friendly, meek and peaceful, he should not seek wealth, he should not be alien to justness, he should administer justice to orphans and widows, he should like charity instead of gold, he should be good to his household and hospitable to those who come to him from foreign lands. God rewards such a prince already during his lifetime with His grace, for God wants to provide peace not only to His angels but also to men, whom He rewards generously with His grace, whom He teaches, and whom He provides with His grace already in this world.'¹¹³

The *Life* of Aleksandr is concerned with the secular characteristics of a ruler, and serves as a martial glorification of the warrior prince. Obviously the secular emphasis was not enough to project his image as that of an ideal Christian ruler, which is why it was supplemented with the characteristics of the ideal ruler as given in the words of the Prophet Isaiah. Ultimately his martial capabilities and the suc-

¹¹¹ Golubinskiy 1903, 11–13.

¹¹² Golubinskiy 1903, 16–23.

¹¹³ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 192.

cess of his career came as rewards from God, and it was in this that the saintly nature of his rule lay. The central theme of the *Life* is princely power, the manifestation of the power of a Christian ruler *par excellence*.

Gábor Klaniczay demonstrated interesting patterns of how the princely cults reflected both the purposes of the dynastic elite and a means by which the Church could teach Christian virtues to its newly converted subordinates. Searching constantly for current, convincing means of representing a ruler's sainthood, these cults expressed the changing popular preference for the holiness of both the martyr king, the *rex iustus*, and the chivalrous *athleta patriae*. Popularised legends of saintly princes incorporated common ideas on charismatic rule, involving leaders who were capable of assuring victory in battle, fertility and the well-being of their province in times of peace.¹¹⁴

The *Life* skilfully combines the needs of a dynastic cult and the craft of speech, i.e. panegyric and epideictic oratory. The eulogies for the ruling elite had deep roots in the rhetoric of Classical times, when praise for a ruler was introduced as a separate literary genre. The influence of classical epideictic oratory on medieval literature was huge, one of the main *topoi* being 'praise of one's forebears and their deeds'.¹¹⁵ The classical virtues of wisdom and strength, *sapientia et fortitudo*, were merits which could enable a hero to take his place directly beside the gods. Isidore of Sevilla (570–636) used this emphasis on classical virtues when he formulated the image of a true Christian hero, and hence the *topos* of *sapientia et fortitudo* spread to the panegyrics of Christian rulers in medieval Europe.¹¹⁶ The emphasis placed on the wisdom of Solomon and the gallantry of Alexander the Great on the battlefield can be traced back to these universal virtues.

The eulogy contained in the *Life* of Aleksandr is given in its introduction, where his virtues are shown, and in the ending, which describes his death and burial. Between these is the storyline describing Aleksandr's battles and his diplomatic dealings with the pope and with Khan Baty. When it comes to the characterization of Aleksandr, the descriptions of his Christian virtues are very formal:

¹¹⁴ Klaniczay 1990, 4.

¹¹⁵ Curtius 1953, 64–85.

¹¹⁶ Curtius 1953, 167–81.

And his days passed in great glory, because Aleksandr loved the priests and monks, and the poor, because he respected the Metropolitan Archbishop and the bishops, and because he obeyed them as he would have obeyed Christ himself.¹¹⁷

Charity and affability towards the poor, and especially towards the clergy, were values that were highly appreciated in the image of popular rulers of medieval Russia.¹¹⁸ Monks who wrote chronicles were lavish in their praise for princes such as Vladimir Svyatoslavich and Vladimir Monomakh, who fostered the Church and gave material aid to poor monks.¹¹⁹ One of the best remembered princes of Russian folklore, Great Prince Vladimir Svyatoslavich of Kiev, was constantly remembered in the traditional folksongs (*byliny*) for his banquets, and the *Primary Chronicle* also devotes much space to describing Vladimir's hospitality in his weekly feasts.¹²⁰

In the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* military valour and physical stature constitute a purely secular ideal of dignity, while a Christian colouring is given by Aleksandr's love for the Church and the poor. A wealthy layman's charity and donations kept the Church prosperous and helped it to protect the population from God's anger by its prayers. The harmony between secular and clerical munificence was thus fulfilled: the one was needed for success in this world and the other for the care of the soul.¹²¹ Aleksandr's virtues were pictured as essentially the four classical ones: prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude.¹²²

Thus the context in which we can find descriptions of ideal rulers is in the eulogies written after the death of a prince. If we regard Metropolitan Kirill's words in the *Life* as proof of his personal devotion towards Aleksandr, we neglect the literary tradition of princely eulogies in the medieval Russian chronicles. V. P. Adrianova-Perets connected these eulogies to the long folk tradition of lamentation for the dead.¹²³ The image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in his *Life* is for the most part very stereotypical and follows the eulogies of the chronicle tradition, in which charity and beauty were compulsory features.

¹¹⁷ *Povesti o zhitii*, 193.

¹¹⁸ Fedotov, vol. I, 1966, 219.

¹¹⁹ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 56, 112.

¹²⁰ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 56; see Harvilahti 1985, 19–28.

¹²¹ Fedotov, vol. I, 1966, 267–70.

¹²² See Wallace-Hadrill 1981, 300–1.

¹²³ Adrianova-Perets 1947, 126–38.

One of the earliest laments for a deceased prince is that in the *Primary Chronicle* dedicated to Mstislav Vladimirovich, dating from 1036, which emphasises these features of an ideal prince:

Mstislav was robust in body and beautiful in countenance. He was meek, had large eyes and was a gallant warrior who loved his *druzhina* above everything. He was not miserly when sharing his estates and never denied people anything with regard to food or drink.¹²⁴

The lament in 1288 for Vladimir Vasilkovich in the *Princely Chronicle of Galicia* gives a detailed description of his exceptional beauty.¹²⁵ The lament for Gleb Svyatoslavich, from 1078, also extols meekness, charity and beauty:

Gleb was merciful towards the poor, loved pilgrims and took care of the churches. His faith was devout and his character meek, and he was beautiful to look at.¹²⁶

The quest for physical beauty was undoubtedly one of the most important elements in the description of an ideal ruler. This emphasis also had deep biblical roots. When the Prophet Samuel was seeking a new king, David was chosen on the grounds of his fine appearance and handsome features.¹²⁷ The ideal ruler was to be perfect in every detail, and physical beauty was an external expression of goodness and charisma. The introductory part of the *Life* places great emphasis on showing the prince's fine appearance to the reader:

He was taller than others and his voice reached the people like a trumpet. His face was like that of Joseph, whom the pharaoh of Egypt placed as the next king after him in Egypt.¹²⁸

The obvious connection in an ideal prince between visible beauty and good mental qualities provides an excellent illustration of medieval ideas of the world. Medieval culture was a system of signs, so that symbolism occupied a significant place in the medieval mind. *Materia*

¹²⁴ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 66.

¹²⁵ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 409.

¹²⁶ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 85.

¹²⁷ Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' So he asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons?' 'There is still the youngest,' Jesse answered, 'but he is tending the sheep.' Samuel said, 'Send for him: we will not sit down until he arrives.' So he sent and brought him in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the Lord said, 'Rise and anoint him; he is the one.' (1 Sam. 16:10-12)

¹²⁸ *Povesti o zhitii*, 187.

had its celestial equivalent, and thus symbolism and idealism were embodied in language, in words. The idea of beauty was an obligatory attribute of sanctity, and to the medieval mind beauty was something brilliant, as light and brightness came from God, while darkness was an object of fear, the domain of the Devil. Hence the medieval ideal did not merely possess the seven gifts of the soul (friendliness, wisdom, concord, honour, power, security and joy), but also the seven gifts of the body (beauty, agility, strength, liberty, health, pleasure and longevity).¹²⁹ The Russian word *svyatoi*, holy, illustrates this symbolism excellently, being derived from the word *svet*, light. The same goes for bright colours; the Russian word *krasnyy*, red, having the same etymology as *krasivyy*, beautiful.¹³⁰

In the case of the funeral lament for Izyaslav Yaroslavich in 1078, in addition to the important qualities of meekness and physical beauty, justice, also an important characteristic for a ruler, was emphasised:

Izyaslav was a handsome man, tall in body and meek in character. He hated lies and loved the truth, for there was no deviousness in him, and he never repaid evil with evil, but he was just.¹³¹

Loud mourning and overemphasised expressions of sorrow were elementary in these eulogies, as also seen in the lament for Izyaslav Yaroslavich, who died in family strife:

Izyaslav's soldiers took his body by ship to Gorodets, opposite Kiev, and all the citizens came to meet him. The body was laid on a sleigh, and it was drawn to the city accompanied by priests and monks singing hymns, although the hymns could not be heard amongst all the crying and lamentation, for the whole city of Kiev was mourning for him.¹³²

This feature is also present in the *Hypatian Chronicle's* description of the sorrow at the funeral of Andrey Bogolyubskiy in 1175:

The people could not be without mourning. They all cried aloud, and their tears were such that they could not see very far, and the cries such that they could not hear for any distance . . . And so he was mourned by the whole city.¹³³

¹²⁹ Le Goff 1988, 331–9.

¹³⁰ Toporov 1995, 433.

¹³¹ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 86.

¹³² *Povest' vremennykh let*, 86.

¹³³ *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 115.

As is evident, the basics in the characterization of the ideal image of Prince Aleksandr lay deep in the tradition of princely eulogies. What makes his *Life* so special, and unique among the princely descriptions of medieval Russia, is its emphasis on its war tales. Aleksandr Nevskiy was first and foremost an invincible warrior, the leader of a victorious army, who defeated all his enemies and was never beaten. In this respect Aleksandr's image, especially in its hagiographic context, comes closer to the medieval pan-European ideal of the warrior-king. Although Aleksandr never even came close to the kind of service that the Teutonic Order offered its clerical warriors, sacrifice for the community in war was probably seen as one way of serving God on both sides of the Baltic frontier.

Therefore the *Life* of Aleksandr has wider implications than the traditional princely descriptions in the chronicles. In its style it comes close to the epics, with its roots in archaic manners of honouring deceased rulers and exalting great heroes. It is very simple in structure, and this simplicity is a great advantage in revealing its archaic and majestic core. It was constructed out of familiar material used for depicting an ideal prince, and thus the heroic image of Aleksandr was easily accepted and understood. In an epic war tale bravery and readiness for personal sacrifice on behalf of society are strongly emphasised, and the hero inevitably loses his individual features as he becomes an idol for the whole community.¹³⁴

One essential feature which the tales of epic heroes commonly share is that the heroic deeds are accomplished in the frontier zone where 'we' and 'the others' meet.¹³⁵ It was underlined in the Russian chronicles that wars against pagan neighbours were acceptable and that God was with the Russian princes when they operated against their heathen neighbours on the borders of their domains, whereas when family feuds reached the stage of open fratricidal war, it was a cause of horror and inspired long laments from the chroniclers. Thus the enemies in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* were the 'Roman king' and the 'Knights who called themselves the servants of God'—the Teutonic Order—so that the clash between Orthodox and Roman Catholic forces was present in the context of the *Life*.

The *Life* nurtured the Christian ideals of a good ruler, and was essentially a eulogy for a warrior. With its concept of valour and

¹³⁴ See Burke 1984, 35–6, 263.

¹³⁵ See Papadopoulos 1993, 133–6.

fame, it comes close to the ideals of the crusades in the Holy Land and the era of chivalry. The ideal of a good warrior was universal. Richard the Lionheart (1157–99) was one of the most celebrated heroes in popular memory, and the French crusader king, Louis IX (1220–70), was later canonised. Richard in particular was a hero who demonstrated a noble combination of skill and bravery on the battlefield with the virtues of chivalry, such as piety, justice and mercy towards the poor.¹³⁶ The virtues of piety and almsgiving also emerge as the main features of Joinville's description of Louis IX.¹³⁷ Prowess in war may also be said to have been essential in an epoch when warfare was the everyday duty of a ruler. Joinville exalted Richard's memory and the fame of a fierce warrior:

... so that when the Saracen children cried, their mothers would call out, 'Hush! King Richard is coming' to keep them quiet.¹³⁸

Aleksandr represents the same formidable image in his *Life*:

After the death of his father, Aleksandr arrived in the city of Vladimir with a powerful force. It was a redoubtable arrival and the news reached the very mouth of the Volga. The women of the Moabites began to frighten their children, saying: 'Prince Aleksandr is coming!'

It was customary in Russian tradition to boast of the awesome effect of an ancestor with a frightening reputation among one's enemies. The *Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli* spoke of the fame of Vladimir Monomakh, with whose name the *Polovtsy* mothers would silence their children,¹³⁹ and the *Princely Chronicle of Galicia* recalled the fame of the father of its hero, Prince Daniil, who returned from a successful military expedition in 1251:

They then returned to their own country with honour, following the path of their father, the great Roman, who had campaigned against

¹³⁶ No doubt King Richard developed as a heroic figure of the troubadours very soon after his death. After all, he was a member of a family who did much to promote the songs and romances of troubadours in the courts of Richard's mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and in other courts of France and England during the rule of the Angevin dynasty. The first romances based on the legends of King Richard the Lionheart, now lost, were dated to 1230–50. Broughton 1966, 38, 42, 140–1.

¹³⁷ See Joinville's *Chronicle of the Crusade of St Lewis* 1965.

¹³⁸ Joinville's *Chronicle of the Crusade of St Lewis*, 155.

¹³⁹ 'All these vast areas and the people that live in them were subjugated by God to Christian people, to the Great Prince Vsevolod and his father, Yuriy, Prince of Kiev, and to his grandfather, Vladimir Monomakh, with whose name the *Polovtsy* frightened their children.' *Slovo o pogibeli*, 130.

the pagans like a lion in the ancient times, so that the *Polovtsy* had used his name to frighten their children.¹⁴⁰

This warlike image also found its way into the princely eulogies, as in the *Laurentian Chronicle*, where the later laments grow in length and involve more elaborate descriptive devices. Ultimately, many of their features must have served as examples for the writer who composed the *Life* of Aleksandr. The virtues of Vladimir Vsevolodovich Monomakh, great prince of Kiev, who died in 1125, are said to have included not only charity and love for the poor, but a more awesome militant feature, which was to gain ground in the *Laurentian Chronicle's* eulogies as time went on:

In 1125 died the orthodox and pious great Russian Prince Vladimir, son of the Orthodox Vsevolod, whose fame is repeated in every country.¹⁴¹

The later eulogy to Great Prince Vsevolod, grandfather of Aleksandr, laid even greater emphasis on the character of a militant, warlike prince. This was clearly highlighted, even though the chronicler made a great effort to describe Vsevolod's love of peace and his reluctance to commit himself to war:

In the year of indiction 6720 [1212], on 14th April, the day when the Holy Roman Pope Martinus is remembered, the Great Prince Vsevolod, who had been given the name Dmitriy in holy baptism, son of Yuriy, pious prince of the whole of Russia, and grandson of Vladimir Monomakh, died after having ruled the land of Suzdal for 37 years. He showed great manliness and firmness in wars, and had all the best qualities of character. He punished evildoers and was merciful to the good. For a prince does not carry a sword without reason, but for the sake of resisting evildoers and giving glory to goodness. The people trembled before his name everywhere, and God gave all the evildoers into his hand.¹⁴²

The eulogy for Vsevolod is long and elaborate, and has a burning fervour in highlighting the martial cunning of the late prince. The tribute to Vsevolod is quite original in its symbolic use of the sword as an expression of a ruler's readiness to use his power for justifiable purposes. In its own way the eulogy claims to justify a warlike ruler who uses his power and military force for his own benefit and in

¹⁴⁰ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 318.

¹⁴¹ *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 129.

¹⁴² *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 184.

order to fortify the prestige of his own dynasty. The emphasis on the prince's construction of public buildings, which points to another long-lasting influence dating back to the protracted eulogy to Andrey Bogolyubskiy, was also strong in Vsevolod's image.¹⁴³

Thus the image of a just, meek, humble ruler who is nevertheless fearless and frightening in war is as present in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* as it was in the princely eulogies originating from the southern Russian chronicle tradition, although it also assumed parallel forms in western European descriptions of warriors during the same epoch. The ideal image of Aleksandr Yaroslavich followed entirely the manner of presenting the hero as a man of Christian valour, ready to fight and fully committed to the concept of chivalrous honour. It was often in later periods that these medieval heroes became associated with a national destiny. This happened to Richard in particular, who was transformed into a mythical leader of the English, and was combined with the popular legend of Robin Hood in the 16th century.¹⁴⁴

The writer of the *Life* was clearly familiar with the obligations that a true chivalric hero had to fulfil, because the narrative repeats the metaphors for honour in war that were well known all over Europe. Consequently the description of Aleksandr Nevskiy as a warrior largely corresponds to the qualities that the whole of Christian Europe expected from its feudal aristocracy. However, the basic question remains: what was this image used for? In order to get closer to the answer, what specific purpose the *Life* of Aleksandr was written for, it is necessary to examine the historical situation in Russia after Aleksandr's death.

3.3. *The claims of internal stability*

The survey in the previous section clarifies the question of the motives behind the *Life* by demonstrating that it should be regarded above all as a princely eulogy, projecting the image of a perfect ruler. The *Life* can also be seen as a demonstration of strong dynastic claims, as it gives strong support to Aleksandr's legacy to his son Dmitriy. This becomes fully understandable when looking at the historical sit-

¹⁴³ *Lawrent'evskaya letopis'*, 184.

¹⁴⁴ Broughton 1966, 142; see Kostyukhin 1972, 36–7; Estlander 1858, 70.

uation following the Mongol conquest, when the khans of the Golden Horde frequently involved themselves in internal struggles for power among the upper military aristocracy of medieval Russia, and when devastating Mongol raids became a burden connected with competing dynastic unions. Hence the core message of the *Life* should definitely be interpreted in the light of its historical background and the circumstances that prevailed after the death of Aleksandr Yaroslavich, the last of the strong rulers of Vladimir, who achieved a relatively long, stable reign and who also managed to pass Novgorod into the hands of his son. The stability of the community arose directly from steady government which was not torn apart by internal strife. This was very well understood and demonstrated throughout the medieval chronicles. Rather than glorifying the arts of warfare, the longing for internal peace in society is the driving force behind the *Life*, and this should be considered its central message. This was in itself no new thing in the Russian historical consciousness, but one of its oldest expressions, already prominent in the *Primary Chronicle* and present in the stories of the voluntary submission of Boris and Gleb to the power of their brother, and ultimately the core message of the *Testament* of Prince Yaroslav in 1054.

A brief look at the convoluted historical situation during the time when the Mongols interfered in the hereditary disputes between the Rurikid princes is needed in order to understand the concern of the author of the *Life* to present the ideal image of a ruler. The throne of Vladimir was a desirable commodity, and the years of long, stable rule by its princes ended with Aleksandr's death. The succession to his title became a matter of dispute between his brothers, Andrey and Yaroslav, and Khan Berke chose to back Yaroslav. However, Prince Yaroslav Yaroslavich had difficulties throughout his reign (1264–71) in mustering his relatives and their armies in moments of need, and Mongol interference in family disputes between the Russian princes became a common habit during these years, so that the political decline of north-west Russia was marked by the growing subservience of the princes to the Mongols, and by protracted civil wars.

The city of Novgorod used the ineffective political control in Vladimir-Suzdal to its own advantage and took major steps to weaken the strong hand which the Suzdal princes had exercised in the city's administration. Yaroslav had to give up many of the rights that his brother Aleksandr had once had, and Novgorod achieved a great

deal of independence during his rule. Yaroslav Yaroslavich died in 1271, and was succeeded by his brother Vasiliy.¹⁴⁵

The district of Pereyaslavl Zalesskiy was a family possession and the headquarters of Dmitriy Aleksandrovich, who at the time of his father's death was prince of Novgorod. After Vasiliy Yaroslavich died childless in 1277, the throne of Vladimir was handed to Dmitriy Aleksandrovich. Unlike his father and grandfather, Dmitriy was not granted a nomination to his throne (*yarlyk*) by the khan of the Golden Horde; instead it seems likely that he claimed the throne for himself by virtue of his seniority in the dynastic inheritance. No chronicles mention him as travelling to the Horde for a patent, nor is there any evidence to show that the khan's envoys 'placed him upon the throne'. The majority of the other Russian princes, including his younger brother Andrey, had been summoned to Saray to take part in a Caucasian campaign under the command of Mangu Temir, while Dmitriy was engaged in strengthening the western borders of Novgorod.¹⁴⁶ As Dmitriy's younger brother Andrey had thus established his relationship with the Horde, his chance for power came when Tuda Mangu became the new khan in 1281. While Andrey, together with several other Russian princes, presented himself at the Mongol court, Dmitriy was again diverted to Novgorod and failed to appear in Saray. Hence Tuda Mangu transferred the throne of Vladimir to Andrey Aleksandrovich.¹⁴⁷ The fraternal feud had begun.

The *Simeonov Chronicle* gives detailed information about the time when the crisis broke out. The previous year had witnessed horrible omens and horrendous storms, and Metropolitan Kirill had died in Pereyaslavl Zalesskiy in December 1280, during his visit to northern Russia. The year 6789 (1281) began with a complaint of interference from the devil himself, who had put hatred and enmity between brothers of the Rostov princely clan. The year saw two brotherly feuds. It opened with a conflict between Konstantin and Dmitriy Borisovichi of Rostov, as the younger brother Dmitriy Borisovich aspired to claim for himself the city of Rostov, the district belonging to his older brother. Great Prince Dmitriy Aleksandrovich acted as an intermediary, and finally peace was made between the

¹⁴⁵ Fennell 1983, 142–52.

¹⁴⁶ Fennell 1983, 145–6.

¹⁴⁷ Martin 1996, 171–2.

brothers. As soon as this had happened, however, the chronicle informs us about the enmities of the Aleksandrovichi:

During that winter the first campaign against Great Prince Dmitriy Aleksandrovich took place, as Prince Andrey arrived from the Tatars with an army against his older brother, Prince Dmitriy, claiming the throne for himself. . .¹⁴⁸

As Andrey had a Mongol army to back up his claims to power, Dmitriy had no option but to escape. Vladimir was sacked and Dmitriy was forced to leave. The *Simeonov Chronicle* gives a powerful account of the devastation that resulted due to the fraternal rivalry and the intervention by the Mongol forces. Andrey's campaign against his older brother gave the chronicler cause for a long description of cruel devastation and the people's misery in his relation of the events of 1281. The Mongols dragged men, women and children into captivity, plundered the cattle and looted the churches. The chronicler refers to the Bible several times to remind his readers that all this wickedness was the consequence of dire sins:

And there was great horror and pain among the Christians. Some of the people froze in the frost, and some were killed by their weapons. Prince Andrey together with Simeon Tonil'evich and his brawlers were striving after the princely throne and were behind all this wickedness. And he allowed the pagan Tatars to return to the Horde. Many evil things took place in the land of Suzdal. He himself ran after his older brother and sat on the throne of Novgorod. He took the city of Pereyasavl on December 19th . . . There was no singing in the churches that Christmas, but instead only crying and lamenting. As the prophet said: 'Your feasts will turn to tears and your songs to laments.' There indeed came a great outcry and much grief, as wives were crying for their children, some wept for their father and mother, some for their brothers and sisters, some for their kinsmen, family and friends.¹⁴⁹

Dmitriy's escape was an unfortunate one. He fled to a fortress that he had built at Kopor'e, north-west of Novgorod, the previous year, but the people of Novgorod made it clear that he would receive no help from them. In January 1282 he went 'across the sea'—to Sweden—as his uncle Andrey Yaroslavich had done to escape the Mongol wrath some 30 years earlier. In February the fortress of Kopor'e was torn down and the Novgorodians chased out those of

¹⁴⁸ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 78.

¹⁴⁹ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 78.

Dmitriy's followers who were still there and took two of his daughters as captives. Not even Dovmont of Pskov could prevent the Novgorodians' anger against his father-in-law, although he managed to remove some of Dmitriy's belongings from the fortress. Dmitriy's stay beyond the sea was short, for he returned to his patrimony of Pereyasavl Zaleskiy in 1283 and succeeded in making a brief comeback on the throne of Vladimir. However, he was soon on the edge of another military conflict with his brother Andrey, who had not only gained Mongol support, but had also won the support of Novgorod and Tver. The fleeing Dmitriy sought allies from another rival Mongol clan, the Nogais, and thus both brothers were strengthened by military forces from competing Mongol clans.¹⁵⁰

For a while Andrey yielded to Dmitriy, and Novgorod was also forced to submit to Dmitriy's claim of superiority. The truce between the brothers did not last long, however, and in 1285 Andrey tried his luck against his brother again, with a third Mongol force behind him. This time Dmitriy held on to his position.¹⁵¹ In 1293 Andrey finally mounted a major Mongol invasion in northern Russia, which threw his brother off the throne. The chronicles describe this as Dyuden's campaign, after its Mongol leader. A number of northern cities were attacked, excluding the towns occupied by Andrey himself and his allies from Rostov. While Dmitriy's court in Pereyasavl Zaleskiy was in panic, waiting for a major assault, Dmitriy and his retinue fled as far west as they could, to Pskov. There he obtained refuge under the shelter of his son-in-law, Prince Dovmont of Pskov.¹⁵²

As shown in Part One, Chapter 2.2, Dmitriy's role in the *Life* was significant, and much of Aleksander's heroic defence of Pskov was directed at showing the importance of steady rule in Pskov according to his own power. The *Life* reminded the ignorant Pskovians to remember well the heroic deeds of their defender, and the *Pskov Chronicles* urged even more directly that they should give shelter to Aleksandr's kin if they needed asylum. Was Dmitriy's escape in 1293 the event that the *Pskov Chronicles* predicted through Aleksandr's words, when he claimed that if one of his kin was to seek refuge in Pskov it should be given to him? Aleksandr's words to the people of Pskov suited this occasion perfectly, as Dmitriy was in desperate need of

¹⁵⁰ Fennell 1983, 146–7.

¹⁵¹ Fennell 1983, 146–8.

¹⁵² See *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 82–3.

refuge in 1293. Indeed, these words can be seen to demonstrate to whom the *Life* was directed, and if the *Life* of Aleksandr was composed for someone of his kin who needed asylum in Pskov, Dmitriy was the person to whom the context clearly refers. In addition, Aleksandr's words commanding his men to obey Dmitriy as loyally as they would serve himself fits well with this occasion of internal crisis over the throne.

The chronicles reveal few details of the end of the sorry reign of Great Prince Dmitriy. It becomes clear from the story of Dyuden's campaign that the cities of Vladimir, Moscow, Pereyasavl, and altogether 14 towns were captured and sacked by the Mongol force. Tver was under the threat of assault, but was saved at the last minute when Andrey and his Mongol allies heard that its prince, Mikhail Yaroslavich, had just returned to his patrimony from the Horde.¹⁵³ At some point Dmitriy Aleksandrovich left Pskov, maybe heading for Tver to meet his newly found ally, Prince Mikhail of Tver, as suggested by Fennell.¹⁵⁴ On his way to his patrimonial town of Pereyasavl, his brother Andrey nearly captured him, and Dmitriy only just managed to escape. He never returned to Pereyasavl, but died somewhere near the town of Volog on the way. The short note of his death is the last information about him in the *Laurentian Chronicle*, while the *Simeonov Chronicle* reveals that he took a monk's vows on his deathbed, as his father Aleksandr had done.¹⁵⁵

In what way were these bloody and devastating events connected with the creation of the image of an ideal prince as presented in the *Life* of Aleksandr? Begunov argued that the *Life* was written during the first phase of brotherly strife, during Dmitriy's short return in 1283, in order to back up his claims to the throne, as demonstrated by the emphasis placed on his military success in the Yur'ev campaign. One argument in favour of the years 1282/3 as the time of writing was—in Begunov's opinion—the neglect of any mention of the fortress of Kopor'e, where Aleksandr had destroyed a German garrison, since the sad events of the escape were still too fresh in the memory of the defamed Dmitriy, whose fortress had so recently been shamefully torn down.¹⁵⁶ This argument is of minor value,

¹⁵³ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 82–3.

¹⁵⁴ Fennell 1983, 150.

¹⁵⁵ *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 208; *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 83.

¹⁵⁶ Begunov 1965, 60–2.

however, since Begunov himself had pointed out that the *Life* did not make use of information from the *Novgorod Chronicles*, which reported Aleksandr's victory in Kopor'e when he drove the *Nemtsy* out of there in 1241.¹⁵⁷

There are several other conflicting points in Begunov's theory. If Metropolitan Kirill had died in 1280 during his visit to northern Russia, he could hardly have had much to do with the writing process itself if this occurred as late as the crisis between Aleksandr's sons, which broke out in 1281, and lasted over a decade. Thus the image of the ideal prince had no purpose before the disturbances in rule, for it appears that the central motive of the *Life* was to draw attention to the prince's acts of reconstruction and enforcement of law and order, and away from internal wars.

Although it is impossible to discover the identity of the author of the *Life*, it is definitely justifiable to focus on the devastating time of internal crisis in Suzdal-Vladimir which occurred after Aleksandr's death. This was a time when a role model such as Prince Aleksandr, as presented in the *Life*, was certainly needed, and it would fit well with the period after the Dyuden campaign, when Dmitriy escaped to Pskov. If the *Life* was written during the internal feuds of the Aleksandrovichi, the emphasis on Christian virtues becomes more and more understandable. The author clearly cherished the moralistic teachings of the Prophet Isaiah, to whom he often refers. The prophet's claims for internal stability were understandable in the context of the pious and just ruler, which carried enormous weight in the context of the disastrous wars that devastated north-west Russia after the fraternal wars began in 1281. The author's statement in the words of the prophet: 'To be good for his country a prince should be according to the image of God, quiet, friendly, meek and peaceful', carried an ideological message aimed at the ruling prince himself.

In speculating on how Metropolitan Kirill was supposed to have influenced the writing of the *Life* in practice, Begunov concluded that in the 1280s Dmitriy Aleksandrovich, the hero of the Yur'ev episode, was the protector of the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God, where Kirill was supposed to have his residence. Hence Dmitriy's role in the *Life* was explained by presenting him as the

¹⁵⁷ See *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 78.

protector of Metropolitan Kirill's residence in Vladimir.¹⁵⁸ Begunov's argument for Dmitriy's role was, however, based on a much later document, a letter from Bishop Iakov of Vladimir. The bishop's letter was dated to 1293, and it was addressed to the 'son of the Great Prince Aleksandr of Vladimir'. In it Iakov (who was bishop of Vladimir from 1288–95) lamented that the churches had been plundered and the monasteries were empty, making reference to the good old days of Dmitriy's forefathers, his grandfather and father, when the princes built new churches and ensured their prosperity with valuable donations. In his letter Bishop Iakov reminded Dmitriy of his obligations towards the Church:

You should know, my son the prince, that great princes, your forefathers, grandfathers, and your father, Great Prince Aleksandr, embellished the Church of God with *khliroshany* and books, and with great tithes in all the cities, and with church laws. And so, son-prince, I, your father, Bishop of Vladimir, remind you my son about the Church of God; for you know by yourself that this Church has been plundered and its houses are empty.¹⁵⁹

Bishop Iakov's letter does not sound very convincing proof of Dmitriy's activity as a patron of the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God. On the contrary, it hints that the bishop was not content with the decline in the level of general peace and prosperity, and was lamenting that the great prince was not fulfilling his obligations as a protector of the churches and monasteries, a virtue highly valued as one of the basic forms of charity practised by a ruling prince. Bishop Iakov's letter fits in very well with the ideological message of the *Life* of Aleksandr, which explicitly highlights the obligations of a good ruler. Iakov's letter is dated just after the devastating campaign by Dyuden, the Mongol general who assisted Andrey Aleksandrovich in driving Dmitriy off the throne.

The image presented in the *Life* was above all an example of the ideal ruler, who was able keep his country in peace and prosperity not only by swift defence, but also by securing its social order. In drawing Aleksandr as such a prince, the author pointed out that his manliness was demonstrated in wars where the enemy came from outside society. He also underlined how Aleksandr confronted the

¹⁵⁸ Begunov 1965, 60.

¹⁵⁹ Makariy refers to the letter in Makariy 1857–83, Vol. 5, Chapter 5; see also Begunov 1965, 60.

enemy by trusting only to God, not by making alliances, as was the case during the brotherly feuds between his sons, whose Mongol allies plundered the cities of north-east Russia. When considering the serious internal problems caused by fraternal wars, the emphasis in the *Life* on saints Boris and Gleb—the martyrs who cherished the idea of brotherly love and the authority of the elder brother—becomes even more understandable.

The central position of Novgorod and Pskov could be explained by the historical situation in 1293, when Dmitriy was offered political asylum by Prince Dovmont of Pskov after his brother had driven him off the throne, and he found no allies in Novgorod. Apparently Dmitriy was still alive when the *Life* was written, since Aleksandr's political testament to his son Dmitriy is so obviously stated in it. As Bishop Iakov's letter contains the same demand for good rule as the *Life*, it is indeed possible that they were written at approximately the same time, some time after Dyuden's campaign and before Dmitriy's death in 1293.

The first part of this study concludes, therefore, that the image of Aleksandr arose from the need for an ideal example, just as the monk Einhard (c. 770–840) wrote his famous *Life of Charlemagne* during the reign of Louis the Pious (824–40), attacking the faults of the reigning monarch by praising the virtues of his predecessor. And as Einhard was well aware of the literary models provided by the classical model of Suetonius, the author the *Life* of Aleksandr mastered the demands of medieval Russian princely eulogies. But the identity of the writer of the *Life* ultimately remains unrevealed. No doubt the *Life* was written in Vladimir, particularly judged by its view of the prince's role, which differs considerably from the prince's role as seen by Novgorod. Apparently the writer was a monk from Vladimir, possibly from the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God, where Aleksandr Yaroslavich was buried.

In 1377 the monk Lavrentiy from the same monastery copied the *Life* for the first time to include it in a wider chronicle context, and as a princely eulogy he placed it logically in the year of Aleksandr's death.¹⁶⁰ This interpolation was essential when considering the popular image of an ideal prince, and alongside with transferring many of the princely hagiographic tales into chronicles, it was repeated

¹⁶⁰ See Shlyapkin' 1915; Begunov, *Kogda Zhitie Aleksandra* 1971, 111–20; Begunov, *Russkie istochniki* 1995, 55.

several times during the 15th century, to be included in many of the major Russian chronicles. This was the beginning of a huge historical interactive process which ultimately affected the reason why the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy was to become in future that of an epoch-defining hero. This important process is the subject of the next part of this survey.

PART TWO

CHANGING THE IMAGE

1. ADAPTING THE IMAGE OF AN IDEAL RULER TO HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

1.1. *The historical background of Aleksandr Nevskiy's era in the Russian chronicles*

So far, this study has dealt with the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy given in his hagiographic *Life*, which was ultimately the basis on which his image as a national legend later arose. The image of an ideal ruler was many-sided, and depicted according to the demands of medieval Russian literary etiquette. In order to examine the patterns and ways in which this image influenced wider conceptions of the past and was integrated into them, the focus of this research now turns to the Russian medieval chronicles and their adaptations of Aleksandr's image. Just as it is important to recognise the significance of the tradition of depicting the ideal prince in the chronicles when penetrating the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy as given in his *Life*, it is equally important to understand the historical background against which it was placed.

The *Life* of the pious and courageous Prince Aleksandr can be regarded as a historical narrative with many dimensions. While providing an earthly biography of a historical person, mixed with a sacred and princely eulogy, it also discusses many important historical events of his era through the well-defined aims of its author. As such, it had an interactive relationship with the chronicles, the books which stored the wisdom of historical narratives and by virtue of their compilative nature preserved a holistic world view, which we might today call historical consciousness, defined by the universal Christian religion. The chronicles conserved history through a long tradition of copying and editing, their individual passages, accounts and historical tales being generated from other histories through selection and supplementation. Despite the compilative nature of the chronicles, old Russian literature was devoted to historical persons and events and it did not allow overt invention. Therefore authors and readers alike believed in the truth of what was described. The style of medieval literature in Russia was characterized by its striving toward generalized and monumental forms, and an emphasis on

the significant, the majestic, the timeless and the eternal. It made an effort to link men with the universe, and it saw symbols and signs of the eternal in everything.¹

This part of the survey will study how the narrative of the *Life* of Aleksandr Yaroslavich was adapted to the medieval Russian concept of historical knowledge. The focus will be on the Russian medieval chronicles, and most of all on the pages in which the narrative of the *Life* was preserved and presented. As a representative of the ideal behaviour of a prince, the narrative of Prince Aleksandr ranked alongside other narratives such as the *Life* of Prince Mikhail of Chernigov, who died a martyr's death for Christianity in the Horde in 1246, the *Life* of Mikhail of Tver, martyred in the Horde for political reasons in 1318, or the whole cycle of narratives that surrounded the great prince of Moscow, Dmitriy Ivanovich, who was shown as another victorious ideal prince in the narratives of his battle at Kulikovo in 1380. Like images in general, the image of the ideal prince was interactive, i.e. it affected other images. The present study concerns itself with two aspects of the interactive process: whether the image of Aleksandr given in his *Life* was influenced by other historical narratives; and how the narrative of Prince Aleksandr affected other historical narratives.

The first part of this study looked at the narrative techniques by which the author of the *Life* created his story of individual greatness. Clerics, because of their literary education, largely formed medieval public opinion, and in the *Life* of Aleksandr typical ideals of individual greatness which ultimately aimed at religious perfection or holiness can be distinguished. The importance of the medieval concept of world order, tightly combined with Christian ideals, made *ordo* both a central idea of medieval history and a great spectacle for the historian.²

When speaking about the historical knowledge of the chronicles, it needs to be pointed out that the Greek term *historia* was not used in the Middle Ages, and thus the whole concept of history needs to be understood from its medieval perspective. The events of the past found their explanation in the cosmology of the epoch, which was in principle a religious one. Thus past events were significant above all before God. Important aspects of the *Life* which point to the

¹ Cf. Likhachev 1973, 175–7; Bobrov 2001, 5–7.

² Ladner (1964) 1983, 880–8.

author's need to claim that Aleksandr's victories were rightful in the eyes of God have already been discussed. The function of medieval historical writing was strikingly different from what we consider to be the principles of history as a scholarly discipline today, because it served mainly to cope with the present. It was not an investigation into the past, and it did not attempt to be such. Looking back was only relevant in connection with an examination of the present situation. Thus the medieval concept of history did not mean 'investigation' but rather 'narration'. This narration sought in every aspect to be in full harmony with the present.³ It was essentially this demand of harmony with the present that made the *Life* open to changes in its narrative.

Although historical narratives attempted to refer to reality, it was up to the individual author to define the limits of truth. All possible means of representation which served the rhetorical principle of *evidentia* were allowed. As narratives from the past supported social regulations and theories which already existed, the chronicles served as material which supported existing presuppositions by illustrating and exemplifying them. This was one of the main characteristics that ruled the representation of historical narratives in the Middle Ages. It used methods of projection which determined the structure of histories according to external models.⁴ Thus the chronicles can be looked at as a treasury of narratives, as a body of material for reconstructing Russian medieval interpretations of the past, and this enables us to examine the adaptations of the image of Aleksandr which were selected for these medieval 'collections of historical consciousness'.

When considering Novgorod's role in the birth of the legend of Aleksandr as an invincible warrior, endowed with God's grace, the question inevitably arises: to what extent it was connected to the historical events that took place in Novgorod during his reign there? The author of the *Life* had the skill and means to make a story of an ideal prince with the universal task of fighting a righteous war against arrogant intruders, and it is therefore interesting to examine the local Novgorodian information about the events behind the legendary battle. The information given in the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, with its detailed accounts of Prince Aleksandr's career, is interesting in many ways and therefore this study will turn its attention there first.

³ See Knappe 2000, 11–20.

⁴ Knappe 2000, 21–2.

Novgorod occupied a special position in the development of Aleksandr's image, for it was the scene, the actual physical soil, on which Aleksandr's heroic deeds took place. The *Novgorod I Chronicle* is divided into two versions: the older version (*starshiy izvod*), which takes events up to the middle of the 14th century, and the younger version (*mladshiy izvod*), which continues up to 1446/7. The oldest version has survived in only one manuscript, the Synodal manuscript (*Sinodal'nyi spisok*), and it is the oldest extant chronicle manuscript in Russia, written in six or seven individual hands and dating from the 13th and 14th centuries. Its earliest part has been defective; the first hand covers the years 1016–1200, and the second the years 1200–1234. This part of the chronicle dates from the 13th century.⁵ The next hand covers the years 1234–1330, a relatively long period that includes the active political career of Aleksandr Nevskiy, while the last hand is responsible for only a few pages given to the middle of the 14th century.⁶ A. A. Gippius maintained that the part covering the years 1234–1330 was produced under the supervision of the archbishop's court in Novgorod around 1330, using the chronicle written in the Yur'ev monastery as its basis.⁷

The chronicler describing the events of the year 6738 (1230) reveals his identity when he reports the death of the blessed *igumen* Savva at the Yur'ev monastery and asks God to look mercifully on the abbot's prayers for all Christians and 'for me, the sinful verger (*ponomar*) Timofey'.⁸ It was previously thought that the scribe whose hand ended in 1234 was the monk Timofey of the church of St Jacob, who has been identified with the chancellor of the archbishop of Novgorod, and who wrote the chronicle during the terms of office of the archbishops Spiridon (1229–49) and Dalmat (1250–74).⁹

⁵ The number of individual hands writing the Synodal manuscript is somewhat uncertain. Gippius, for example, states that the palaeographic evidence for two thirteenth-century hands is not very strong; the first part of the Synodal manuscript could also have been written by only one person. See Gippius 1997, 8.

⁶ Dietze 1971, 29–30.

⁷ The main dispute over the writing of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* concerns the question of which church supervised it. The Cathedral of St Sophia is the indisputable agent in this process, but there are also traces of other local churches and monasteries in Novgorod with alleged scribes of their own where the chronicle could have been written, including the Church of Yakov and the Monastery of Yur'ev. A. A. Gippius and Joachim Dieche favour the Monastery of Yur'ev, while B. M. Kloss argues for the Church of Yakov. Gippius 1997, 4–70; Dietze 1971, 36–7; Kloss, *Letopis' Novgorodskaya pervaya* 1987, 245–6.

⁸ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 70.

⁹ Gippius 1997, 4–11.

Although the handwriting of this scribe ends in 1234 and is succeeded by a new hand representing the 14th century, Gippius concluded from the stylistic similarity that the third writer had followed the chronicle provided by the monk Timofey, copying it faithfully. As chancellor to the archbishop, Timofey left six documents behind him (dated to the 1260s) but, according to the latest palaeographic analysis, these do not match the handwriting of the Synodal manuscript of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*. According to Gippius it is evident that the writer of the first part of the Synodal manuscript was a monk at the Yur'ev monastery, working on the basis of an archiepiscopal chronicle originally composed by the monk Timofey. The Synodal manuscript later lost its folios from the year 1234 onwards, however, and these were written anew in the 1330s, according to the archiepiscopal chronicle. This meant that the stylistic unity conferred by the monk Timofey was preserved, since both the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century scribes used the archiepiscopal chronicle written by him from 1230–74 as their source.¹⁰

Gippius' thesis is most interesting, since it implies that the whole description of the era of Aleksandr Nevskiy was based on the chronicle written by the monk Timofey, who had a very original style of his own—solemn and ceremonial, embellished with rich details and borrowings from Christian literature, and influenced by the style of the *Primary Chronicle*. The *Novgorod I Chronicle* certainly has a fine sense of drama and a peculiar tension of its own in its descriptions of events, such as the Mongol conquest of 1238 and the expedition of the Novgorodians in 1268 against the Teutonic Order in Rakovor.¹¹

The concept of history as a drama of Christian salvation is profoundly visible in the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, particularly in the style of the monk Timofey. A note in the year 1235 starts by warning how the devil gains enjoyment from bloodshed among Christians and is always seeking evil by spreading quarrels among people and between the Russian princes.¹² The chronicler shows a fine sense of drama in drawing a picture in which the devil and the sins of mankind play a major role in the drama of Christian salvation. He shows how blood flowed in the Russian lands when its princes fought, not only against external enemies such as the *Polovtsy*, the *Nemtsy* and the

¹⁰ Gippius 1997, 3–72.

¹¹ See *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 74–7, 85–8.

¹² *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 73.

Lithuanians, but also with each other. These internal feuds and the arrival of the godless Tatars in 1238 as a punishment are presented in the manner of a great didactic story, with a strong moralistic tone.¹³

The chronicler's statement about the devil rejoicing at seeing the blood of Christians came to pass in the events of 1238. The chronicler blames not only dynastic feuds, but also the princes of neighbouring Russian principalities for their reluctance to provide help when other principalities are attacked. The blame is clearly levelled at Great Prince Yuriy Vsevolodovich of Vladimir, who did not want to answer the call of the princes of Ryazan to form a coalition against the intruders, but insisted on going on with his own separate war.¹⁴

In terms of the history of salvation, the devastation of 1238 is compared to that which occurred when God allowed Joshua, the son of Nun to know that the Israelites would know His wrath when they arrived at the Promised Land. In the same way the foreign intruders captured Ryazan and killed its princes. This was another manifestation of the wrath of God that it was impossible to escape.¹⁵ After Ryazan the other Russian cities fell one after another, and Great Prince Yuriy was killed in battle beside the River Sit in 1238. Although Novgorod was miraculously saved, the chronicler is not overjoyed at this, but mourns the destruction of the Russian lands, saying:

Indeed, who of us, brothers, fathers and children, would not cry at seeing the punishment of God falling upon the Russian lands. It was because of our sins that God let those pagans come upon us.¹⁶

As it was clerics who wrote the chronicle, the historical events show the plan of God, the creator of all. There is an educational overtone throughout the *Novgorod I Chronicle* which teaches how to understand historical events properly in order to become a better Christian. This educational tone follows fully the *Primary Chronicle's* theory of God's punishment when searching for the reasons for the attacks by the nomads from the steppe. When writing about the Mongol conquest the chronicler takes the opportunity to give some religious

¹³ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 57–77.

¹⁴ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 74–75.

¹⁵ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 75.

¹⁶ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 76.

teaching, stating that ultimately God does not want to see people hurt, but wishes them well. It is the devil who is overjoyed at the distress which befalls people. On this occasion the chronicler reminds people of the practical ways in which one can please God by prayer and fasting. He also reveals great pessimism with regard to human nature, stating that people have a tendency to return to their sins, like pigs to their excrement.¹⁷

If western European culture in the Late Middle Ages was nurtured in the universities, Russian culture of the same period was nurtured in the libraries of the monasteries. In principle, medieval Russian monasteries can be divided into two categories, those where the monks lived like hermits, meditating and remaining in their own cells, so that the only mutual gatherings were at church services, and those which worked on the principle of sharing food, work and housing. These collective monasteries were often economically self-sufficient, highly autonomous and wealthy, with large libraries where they stored old books and scriptoria where new texts were written. From the middle of the 14th century onwards these monasteries developed as the leading centres of literacy.¹⁸

The patterns of Russian chronicle writing are still very poorly known. Who actually wrote the chronicles? Were the scribes monks and clerics, or were laymen involved, as is sometimes argued when considering some of the princely chronicles such as that of Galicia? Only a few people involved with the chronicle writing process can be identified. The two names associated with the *Novgorod I Chronicle* are clerics, Herman Voyata and Timofey. In addition, the man who copied the *Laurentian Chronicle*, Lavrentiy, was a monk at the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir.

The chronicles demonstrated not only Christian chronology and the embodiment of Christian rule in the world, but they were naturally also political demonstrations, justifications for those who were in power. They clearly had many other objectives as well, serving as chronologically written annals which gave society its coherence. Many new literary genres grew up in western Europe during the High Middle Ages, when political songs, troubadours' lyrics and romances of chivalry became popular in the courts. In Russia the main genre was still the chronicle, and no particular forms of courtly

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Bobrov 2001, 243–5.

literature are known. It is therefore clear that the *Life* of Aleksandr in some ways fulfilled many of the requirements of courtly literature, repeating the chivalrous ideas of its time.

One particular feature which appeared throughout Europe during the crusades connects the attitude of the Russian chronicles with universal Christian morals; this is their condemnation of feuds between Christian princes. These internecine quarrels were often the objects of complaint in Europe as well, and it was regularly shown that Christians should unite to fight the heathens. The quarrels between European feudal barons were not seen as political wrongs in themselves, but as wrongs against God, because they diverted secular rulers away from the crusades.¹⁹

The *Tale of the Conquest of Baty* (*Povest' o nashestvii Batyya*), is included in all the most important chronicles of medieval Russia. It is attributed to the years 6745–7 (1237–9) in the *Hypatian Chronicle*, the *Novgorod I Chronicle* and the *Laurentian Chronicle*, with local variations in each case. All the important Russian chronicles of the 15th century, such as the *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles, were built up out of these three components.²⁰

The *Laurentian Chronicle* is one of those categorised as princely family chronicles, and therefore, as one might expect, its tone is quite different from the coherent and solemn style of the *Novgorod Chronicle*. The *Tale of the Conquest of Baty* in the *Laurentian Chronicle* was of later origin, however, and was possibly composed during the 14th century if it was attached to the chronicle by the monk Lavrentiy himself.²¹ It differs considerably from earlier versions, and presents the princes of Vladimir in a heroic light, by contrast with the *Novgorod I* and *Hypatian* chronicles, which depicted them as passive and reluctant to assist their neighbours, the princes of Ryazan, who were the first to face the Mongol storm. In the *Laurentian Chronicle* the princes of Vladimir, Yuriy Vsevolodovich and Vasilko Konstantinovich, stand up heroically to the godless Mongols and claim honour in battle through their deaths as martyrs, Great Prince Yuriy being described in his necrology as a peace-loving prince who fought only when there were no other options left. The chronicle nevertheless comes

¹⁹ Klein 1971, 109.

²⁰ It is evident that the *Novgorod I* and *Hypatian Chronicle* versions of the tale are the oldest ones. On the dating of the *Laurentian Chronicle* see Prokhorov 1972, 77–104; Prokhorov 1974, 77–98.

²¹ See Prokhorov 1987, 366.

to the conclusion that 'an honourable fight is better than a bad peace'. Yuriy is depicted as a great man who was eventually forced to sacrifice his own blood:

If there is no ordeal, there will be no crown, and if there is no pain, there will be no prize. Those who commit themselves to good are not without numerous enemies.²²

Of the two Vsevolodovichs who avoided an open confrontation with the Mongols at the beginning of the conquest, Yuriy was killed and his brother Yaroslav survived, thanks to the fact that he delayed both his arrival and the joining of forces with his brother, so that he never made it to the battle of Sit. Whether his delay was on purpose is a question that will perhaps never be answered. The *Laurentian Chronicle* finds a solemn explanation for this passivity, even quoting a biblical parallel. The role of Yaroslav Vsevolodovich is presented in great detail, for after all this horrible destruction the story of the Mongol conquest ends with a glimpse of hope, a light on the distant horizon among the dark ruins of Russia, as the *Laurentian Chronicle* states:

God sent us salvation among our own princes and delivered us from our enemies . . . The Tatars chased our princes, but failed to catch them. Just as Saul chased David and God saved him from Saul's hands, likewise God rescued the princes who were left alive from the hands of the foreigners; these were the pious and Orthodox Great Prince Yaroslav and his noble sons, who were six in number: Aleksandr, Andrey, Konstantin, Afanasiy, Daniil and Mikhail . . .²³

This interpretation was deeply rooted in the drama of salvation and it is no wonder that it was adopted in all the later chronicles of Moscow, and in those that assumed a worldwide historical perspective, such as the *Novgorod IV* and *Sophia I* chronicles. This fourteenth-century adaptation of the *Tale* assigned a very significant role to the father of Aleksandr Nevskiy, Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, who is regarded as pious and Orthodox and as having been saved by God from the hands of the infamous Khan Baty. It is notable that the name of Yaroslav Yaroslavich, the son who was grandfather to the princes of Tver, was not mentioned in the list of the noble sons of Yaroslav Vsevolodovich.

²² *Lawrent'evskaya letopis'*, 200.

²³ *Lawrent'evskaya letopis'*, 225.

The *Life* of Aleksandr did not refer to these contemporary events, which were regarded as punishments for sins in the Russian chronicles. While the *Life* concentrated on presenting the military valour and Christian virtues of Aleksandr Nevskiy, it carefully avoided touching upon the unfavourable features in his heroic image. The concept of punishment is something in which the *Life* shows no interest. As the hopeless battle of the Russian princes against the Mongols is totally ignored in the *Life*, what was there to be humble about? Aleksandr was depicted as an exemplary Christian ruler whom God rewarded, and hence the theme of punishment was not of interest. On the contrary, where the chronicles repeated the idea of punishment, the *Life* of Aleksandr was all about rewards.

1.2. *The image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the contemporary chronicle of Novgorod*

As shown in the previous section, the chronicle tradition of Vladimir tended to relate the events of the fatal Mongol occupation with the aim of presenting its great princes as ultimate heroes. The *Laurentian Chronicle* boasted solemnly that the light was seen in the noble sons of Prince Yaroslav, beginning with Aleksandr. This kind of treatment would be impossible without a certain distance between the actual happenings and the writing date, for the chronicler is clearly capable of adjusting and interpreting the dramatic history of the Mongol conquest, making parallels with biblical events. The process of interpretation and explanation is clearly visible in its entries, giving material to the historical consciousness of later times.

It is therefore interesting to study the local and apparently contemporary notes of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, which gives a great deal of information about the career of Aleksandr Yaroslavich in Novgorod. As shown before, the *Novgorod I Chronicle* also contained entries which gave a sophisticated interpretation of the history the Mongol storm. Its focus was not on military leaders, or on Vladimirian great princes, but generally on moralising and on understanding the ways in which God influenced this world. After the dark tones of the Mongol conquest, the yearly events of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* return to local affairs, depicting Prince Aleksandr marrying the daughter of the prince of Polotsk, and destroying the fortress of Shelon with the men

of Novgorod in 1239. In the next year, 1240, the Swedes advanced to the Neva:

The Swedes (*Svei*) came with great strength, and the Norwegians (*Murmane*), Finns (*Sum*) and Tavastians (*Em*) in a huge number of boats; the Swedes with their prince and bishops. They stayed by the River Neva, at the mouth of the River Izhora, ready to take Ladoga and Novgorod, in fact eager to capture all the lands of Novgorod, to put it plainly. But God, who loves people in all His mercy did a good deed and saved us from the foreigners, because without the help of God they (the Swedes) were troubling themselves in vain. A message arrived in Novgorod that the Swedes were heading towards Ladoga. Prince Aleksandr did not waste time. He confronted them with the men from Novgorod and Ladoga and defeated them with the help of St Sophia and with the prayers of our queen the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, on 15th July, the day when the SS Kirikos and luletta are remembered, and in the same week when the 630 holy fathers held their council in Chalcedon.²⁴

It has generally been argued that the description is both contemporary and independent of the *Life* of Aleksandr.²⁵ This was criticised by John Lind, who attacked in particular I. P. Shaskol'skiy's arguments on the dating of the account of the battle in the older version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*. However justified Lind's arguments about the origin of the passage in the chronicle may have been, he went even further, arguing that since the 'third author' wrote the passage in the 1330s, he could have used the *Life* of Aleksandr if he had wished to do so, and if he knew of it.²⁶

Since Lind was determined to show that the account in the *Novgorod I Chronicle* was secondary in origin, he referred to a source which in his opinion better reflected the original contemporary account, and came to the conclusion that the only chronicle entry which described the events of 1240 independently, without any influence from the *Life* of Aleksandr, was the *Pskov I Chronicle*, which in his mind more accurately reflected the earliest annals of Novgorod.²⁷ Lind's concept of the originality of the *Pskov I Chronicle* account is, however, totally without foundation, being given without arguments based on any

²⁴ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis, starshii izvod*, 77.

²⁵ Shaskol'skiy 1978, 179; Begunov 1959, 230.

²⁶ Lind 1991, 274.

²⁷ Lind 1991, 272–3.

sources or studies. The account of the year 1240 in the *Pskov I Chronicle* is not only extremely short, but it also gives a date given nowhere else, as it reports that 'The Swedes came to the Neva, and Prince Aleksandr together with the men of Novgorod defeated them on May 16th.'²⁸ However, the writing of the chronicle in Pskov did not start until the 14th century, so that the assumption of an early source is totally without justification. Lind's notion was also responded to by Begunov, who claimed that Lind's arguments contradicted most respected scholars who had recently studied chronicle writing in Pskov, notably A. N. Nasonov and Hans-Jürgen Grabmüller.²⁹

The references to Aleksandr in the *Pskov I Chronicle* actually bear more proof of a late date of writing. The chronicle passage for 1241 is mixed up with later events and includes a list which counts the years from the oppression of the Russian lands by the Mongol tax collectors to the death of the 'Tsar' Aleksandr and the murder of the Lithuanian King Mindaugas, after which the fragmentary information ends in the year 6776 (1268).³⁰ It is obvious that such an account could only have been produced after Aleksandr's death, and there is nothing to indicate why the previous entry mentioning him for the year 1240 should have been taken from contemporary sources. The naming of Aleksandr as a 'tsar' also implies that the insertion is fairly late. Although the title was familiar in thirteenth-century Russia, it was certainly not used of the Russian princes at that time.

As Lind doubted the originality of the Neva description in the oldest edition of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, he raised three points which to his mind indicated 'dubious' elements in the contemporary chronicle. Firstly, he seizes on the suggestion in the chronicle that the Swedish bishop was killed, although all the Swedish bishops seem to have survived the year 1240. According to Lind, a contemporary chronicle writer in Novgorod would undoubtedly have known whether so prominent a member of the Swedish expedition had really been killed, and it would have been uncharacteristic of him to write contrary to the fact.³¹ Begunov answered that, although containing contemporary information, the *Novgorod I Chronicle* had based its information

²⁸ *Pskovskya pervaya letopis'*, 13.

²⁹ Begunov, *Russkie istochniki* 1995, 55–6. See also Nasonov 1941, 3–57; Nasonov 1955; Grabmüller 1975.

³⁰ *Pskovskya pervaya letopis'*, 13.

³¹ Lind, 1991, 275.

on Swedish deaths on hearsay, for the same passage mentions that the Swedes buried their dead themselves. The Novgorodians' information on Swedish casualties could not have been based on more than rumours; this implies that misconceptions regarding the identity and names of fallen Swedes were unavoidable.³² Obviously the accounts of Novgorodian military conflicts reveal inescapably propagandistic features, and the unselfishness of the 'honest' chronicler should not be taken too naively.

Lind was convinced that the name of the Swedish army commander, given in the chronicle passage as Spiridon, the same name as the archbishop of Novgorod at the time of the battle of the Neva, would have been impossible in a Swedish context. It was impossible for Lind to comprehend how a contemporary chronicler writing soon after the event could have made such a mistake. Also, the reference to Norwegians (*Murmane*) participating in the Swedish assault is listed as an equally dubious addition to the chronicle, for there are no other sources that confirm this. Again Lind maintains that a contemporary chronicler would not have thought of including Norwegians in the account unless he knew that they had participated, but that such an inclusion could have seemed natural to an editor working in the 1320s/30s, because at that point Norway and Sweden were ruled by the same king, the young Magnus Eriksson, in whose name both Sweden (1323) and Norway (1326) made treaties with Novgorod.³³ Regarding the involvement of Norwegians in the Neva campaign, the *Novgorod I Chronicle* is indeed the only source, and the truthfulness of its content is a matter of general source criticism. In his reply to Lind, Begunov again pointed out that the contemporary account did not exclude information based on hearsay and, correspondingly, it does not exclude occasional mistakes, such as the names of the Swedish army commanders.³⁴

To explain the 'mistakes' and repetitions in the chronicle passage, Lind argued that it was derived from the 'chronicle version of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*'.³⁵ There is, in fact, no such extant source as the 'chronicle version' of the *Life*; instead there are several adaptations of it presented in different chronicles, each chronicler having

³² Begunov, *Russkie istochniki* 1995, 56.

³³ Lind 1991, 275–6.

³⁴ Begunov, *Russkie istochniki* 1995, 56.

³⁵ Lind 1991, 271.

been free to modify it and use slightly differing texts as his sources. It is therefore misleading to speak of a specific chronicle version. Some scholars, such as Serebryanskiy, used the name 'Chronicle Edition' (*Letopisnaya redaktsiya*) for the oldest version of the *Life*, since its first texts are preserved in the *Laurentian* and *Pskov II* chronicles.³⁶ It should be noted that these two examples of the oldest surviving chronicle versions of the First Edition of the *Life* are not identical, and the *Life* inserted in the *Laurentian Chronicle* has not even survived in its entirety, but is only fragmentary. Begunov also used the term 'Chronicle Edition' alongside the 'Second Edition' of the *Life*. He was clearly referring to the 'Chronicle Edition' as a later and modified text. According to him the Second Edition of the *Life* arose in Novgorod and was merged with the *Novgorod I Chronicle* edition of the 1430s which is reflected in the *Sophia I Chronicle*.³⁷ The treatment of the *Life* in the chronicles is, however, important when observing its significance in different regions of Russia at different times, and this study will focus on this aspect in later sections.

Lind also claimed that the hyperbolic expressions concerning the strength of the Swedish troops were alien to the 'sober' style of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, which was correct and reliable in its passages describing enemy expeditions, but that this hyperbole was typical of the hagiographic genre.³⁸ However, one should not classify the exaggerated description of enemy forces as typical only of the hagiographic genre, but rather as typical of war tales in general, and not alien to chronicle descriptions either. No doubt several of the clerics involved in the chronicle writing, such as the monk Timofey, distinguished themselves by a highly literary style, and had the motivation and skill to use both biblical and other forms of literature in their chronicle writing.³⁹

Based on the ambiguity surrounding the information about the Swedish participants in the Neva campaign, Lind was convinced that the chronicler of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* in its oldest version used two sources when putting together his version of the battle. Since the events of the year 1240 started with the statement that 'The Swedes came with great strength, and Norwegians, Finns and Tavas-

³⁶ Serebryanskiy 1915, 153–77.

³⁷ See Begunov, *Russkie istochniki* 1995, 55; Begunov 1959, 229–38.

³⁸ Lind 1991, 276.

³⁹ Gippius 1999, 350.

tians in a huge number of boats: the Swedes with their prince and bishops . . .', Lind argued that the repetition was the result of the chronicler combining two sources, the first part of the sentence being attributable to the 'Chronicle version' of the *Life*, with its supposed hagiographic hyperbole (great strength, large number of boats), and not to the original chronicle version.⁴⁰ However, repetition of this kind is a commonly used manner of representation, in which the first part of the sentence reveals the overall information and the second, by repetition, highlights the main actor.⁴¹ Also, its 'hagiographic patterns' are by no means exceptional. The *Novgorod I Chronicle* gives several war descriptions that employ the same types of narrative aids as in the Neva campaign, including others from older periods, written by the second author in the 13th century, in which hyperbolic description of the enemy force and other *topoi* also present in the Neva description are used.

The chronicle reports how the Tavastians harassed the territory of Novgorod in 1142. The men from Ladoga killed 400 of them and left no-one to escape, i.e. they killed them all. In the same year the Swedish prince mounted an offensive and with 60 ships attacked the merchants of Novgorod, who had only three ships. The merchants were very successful, however, for the chronicle reports that they managed to kill 150 Swedes and capture three of their ships. Still more interesting is that, according to the chronicle, the Swedish prince was accompanied by a bishop.⁴² This account uses exactly the same kind of hyperbole as the Neva account of 1240. Here too, the Swedes are presented as a superior power with a large number of ships, while their bishop participates in the expedition side by side with the prince.

Thus the accounts contained in the *Novgorod I Chronicle* can hardly be regarded as reliable and neutral in describing the confrontations between the armies of Sweden and Novgorod in Karelia and around Lake Ladoga. In 1149 the Novgorodians and the *Votyans* encountered intruding forces from *Em* and killed them all,⁴³ while in 1164 a detachment of Swedes which had arrived on Lake Ladoga with

⁴⁰ Lind 1991, 276–7.

⁴¹ Gippius 1999, 350.

⁴² *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 26.

⁴³ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 28.

55 ships was beaten back and 43 of their ships captured. Only a few are mentioned as having managed to escape, and they were at least wounded.⁴⁴ This battle description, which sounds highly hyperbolic, is reported with the exact date and time of day, at the fifth hour on Thursday 28 May, the day of Saint Elladios. One can hardly claim the description as authentic, even though the date of the battle was remembered so well.

Among the many descriptions of clashes of interest that took place on the Karelian isthmus and around Lake Ladoga, there is one in which many of the conventions that were applied to the battle of the Neva in the *Novgorod I Chronicle* can be seen. This is the account of an event in 1228, when the Tavastians arrived on Lake Ladoga with their ships. Here again, as in the Neva battle, the message of their arrival was taken to Novgorod. The description relates how the news reached Novgorod *na Spasov' den'*, on the day of the Transfiguration of Our Lord (6 August). Prince Yaroslav and the men of Novgorod left with their ships to meet this sudden enemy, but the military commander of the Ladoga area, called Vladislav, was too impatient to wait for the troops from Novgorod to arrive, and hurried off to confront the Swedes with his own detachment.⁴⁵ Here we see another theme used in the Neva description, that of the impatient warrior anxious to enter battle, even to the extent that he does not want to wait for auxiliary detachments. Aleksandr followed this pattern 12 years later, hurrying immediately to the scene of battle beside the Neva. It is notable, however, that the *Novgorod I Chronicle* omits the essential heroic feature presented in the *Life*, that Aleksandr did not wait for his father's detachments. Although the chronicle states that he did not waste time in going to the River Neva, there is no talk of the auxiliary troops being left behind.⁴⁶

There is no reason to doubt Begunov's well-founded statement that the oldest edition of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* received no influence from the *Life* of Aleksandr. Lur'e and Gippius also criticise Lind for his poorly argued views.⁴⁷ The independence of the chronicle passage describing the Neva battle, as well as all the other events of

⁴⁴ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 31.

⁴⁵ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 65.

⁴⁶ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 77.

⁴⁷ Gippius 1999, 349. Lur'e 1997, 107–8.

Prince Aleksandr's career in the oldest version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, is very well justified. Besides having a totally different narrative interest, they also have different interests in the people who were present at the battle. The chronicle tells us that 20 or fewer men of Novgorod and Ladoga were killed there, and mentions four of them by name: Konstantin Lugotnich, Gyuryata Pineshscinitch, Namest, and Drochilo Nezdyllov.⁴⁸ None of these are mentioned in the *Life*, which gives the names of six men who distinguished themselves by their bravery in the battle of the Neva. The local Ingrian chief Pelgusiy is also omitted from the earliest Novgorod chronicle account of the battle. Both sources bring up totally different persons among the participants.

As the events of the year 1240 were recorded in the Synodal manuscript in the handwriting of the 1330s, the copyist could have used the information on the events at the Neva given in the *Life*, had he known of it and wished to do so. But he did not. Whether he knew of it or not is a mystery, since the first surviving extant manuscript of the *Life* in the *Laurentian Chronicle* is dated only to 1377. Also, the hagiographic *Life* described the battle of the Neva in total ignorance of the information contained in the local Novgorod chronicle. The accounts in the *Life* and in the oldest version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* arose independently. The whole setting of princely exaltation was clearly alien to the administration that prevailed in Novgorod. While the Novgorod chronicle account can be regarded as a purely secular description of the political events of the era, the *Life* of Aleksandr had more complicated aims, as has been observed earlier.

It should be noted that Aleksandr's actions in Novgorod were political, something much more than heroic fighting. His rule also provoked many popular uprisings, as his compliance with the khan's orders led him to act swiftly to suppress any signs of rebellion or opposition towards his or the Mongols' policies. Thus the interests of Novgorod and its prince were not always directed to the same goals. It is apparent that, for the chronicler as well as for the population of Novgorod, Aleksandr was not remembered as an unspotted war hero; he was seen as one of its many princes facing the swiftly turning tides of Novgorod's internal politics. He obviously had both

⁴⁸ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 77.

supporters and opponents in the city. In 1240, soon after the battle of the Neva, he had been chased out of Novgorod, probably by the party favourable to the Germans, which also ruled in Pskov. The chronicle mentions that it was the lesser people (*menshie lyudi*) who were against Aleksandr's reign in 1255, when they chased out his son Vasiliy and invited his brother Yaroslav to take the throne of Novgorod.⁴⁹

The *Novgorod I Chronicle* conveys the deepest resentment towards the establishment of taxation by the Mongols in 1257–9, as witnessed by the laments included in the description of the census official's visit and the announcement of the intention to levy tithes as well as customs duties. Prince Aleksandr suppressed the revolt of the citizenry and arrested his own son Vasiliy, who was supporting the anti-Mongol rising. Aleksandr punished the participants severely, executing many of them, and in the case of those who had lured his son to oppose his policy, he either had their noses cut off or their eyes gouged out.⁵⁰ After Aleksandr had secured the safety of the Mongol tax officials, the chronicle continues as follows:

The accursed ones began to ride through the streets, registering the houses of the Christians. For our sins, God has brought wild beasts from the desert to eat the flesh of the strong and to drink the blood of the boyars.⁵¹

It is evident that the cult of Aleksandr Nevskiy had no place in Novgorod in the early 14th century, when the third scribe copied Timofey's text, and why should it? The political situation in the city-state was not favourable to dynastic cults. The passage for the year 1263 reveals that the circumstances of Aleksandr's death and burial were fully known to its writer, as he described how Aleksandr was first forced to stay at the khan's court over the winter and was released only after he became ill. The writer knew well the important dates of his death and burial, and that he became a monk on his deathbed. He also knew that Aleksandr was buried in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God, in a ceremony at which Metropolitan Kirill and the highest clergy of Vladimir officiated, but even so he did not borrow any material from the hagiographic *Life*

⁴⁹ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 80–81.

⁵⁰ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 82.

⁵¹ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 82–83.

of Aleksandr. The chronicler does express his humble wish, however, that God will be merciful towards Prince Aleksandr: 'Let him see Your face in the life to come, O merciful God, for he suffered much affliction for Novgorod and for the whole Russian land.'⁵²

Although the chronicler revealed his knowledge of the burial ceremony in the monastery at Vladimir, he treated Aleksandr as a prince and a human being rather than as a saint. Aleksandr fulfilled his duties as a military leader in battle, but at the same time his rule was also an object of resentment and opposition. The consequences of his submission to Mongol rule were certainly not looked upon favourably, although the chronicler did not accuse Aleksandr directly of causing the sufferings of the Christians, but remarked that the bloodshed wrought by the accursed pagans happened 'for our sins', as the familiar *topos* ran once again.

As the *Life* was not used as a basis for the historical description, the image of Aleksandr was not highlighted above those of the other princes. The citizens of Novgorod were clearly on the side of St Sophia, the Holy Wisdom. In addition, when good times prevailed, victories were gained, and Novgorod was prosperous, St Sophia was on the side of the people of Novgorod. It was always in connection with St Sophia, and never Prince Aleksandr, that the chronicler expressed the attitudes of the city towards its beloved patron, who was not an earthly being. At the same time, the earliest extant Russian chronicle, the Synodal manuscript of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, described the prince of Suzdal quite neutrally, both in the times of his glory and in the times of his vicarious malevolence against the city of St Sophia. As the description of the violent repression of the uprising against Mongol taxation reveals, Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich was ultimately prepared to act even against St Sophia.

To conclude the study of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image in the oldest version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, it is apparent that Aleksandr Yaroslavich was treated like any other aspirant to the throne of Novgorod. The careers of Aleksandr and his family were recorded without any influence from the hagiographic *Life*, and thus his image was much the same as all the other northern princes fighting for the privilege of sitting on its throne. It was the glory of Novgorod rather than the glory of its temporary rulers that the chronicle

⁵² *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 84.

depicted. Since the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* is not included in the oldest surviving chronicle of Novgorod, it is quite evident that the chronicler who wrote these annals under the direction of the archbishop's court either did not know of the *Life*, or did not feel the need to use it in the early 14th century, when this part of the Synodal manuscript of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* was written.

1.3. *Consolidation of the new image in the fifteenth-century chronicles*

The *Life* of Aleksandr was inserted into a chronicle for the first time by the monk Lavrentiy in his manuscript dated 1377. Lavrentiy was a monk at the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God, where Prince Aleksandr was buried, and it is probable that he took the *Life* from a hagiographic compilation available at the monastery.⁵³ The *Laurentian Chronicle* gives the local chronicle tradition of Vladimir and its most influential monastery. It is therefore essential to take a closer look at the relationship that the *Life* had with the chronicles of the time.

Vladimir soon lost its position as the seat of the great princes, as the rising principality of Moscow grew in prestige. The writing of chronicles in Moscow started in the early 14th century, and non-chronicle tales of Moscow origin, such as hagiographic texts and narratives, also first appeared around that time.⁵⁴ The princely chronicles, composed by scribes, *d'yaks*, in the princely palaces, concentrated at first on strictly local events, and were later supplemented by the chronicles of the neighbouring principalities of Tver and Ryazan. From the time of Dmitriy Ivanovich onwards, i.e. from the end of the 14th century, the usual chronicle accounts were supplemented by hagiographic lives and legends. As there are no extant early Moscow chronicle manuscripts, their content is only reflected in later editions.⁵⁵

The first editions of the Moscow chronicles, dated to the years 1340, 1354/9, 1389 and 1408, made extensive use of information from other local chronicles. The 1408 edition is the most important

⁵³ See Shlyapkin 1915; Begunov, *Kogda Zhitie Aleksandra* 1971, 111–20; Begunov, *Russkie istochniki* 1995, 55.

⁵⁴ Murav'eva 1983, 110.

⁵⁵ Murav'eva 1983, 114.

literary record to have survived from the period of early chronicle writing. It was preserved in one manuscript, the *Trinity Chronicle*, a fifteenth-century Moscow chronicle which was destroyed in the great fire of Moscow in 1812, but before that it had been widely used by an early nineteenth-century historian, Nikolay Karamzin, who left numerous excerpts from it in the footnotes to his major series of the History of the Russian state, *Istoriya gosudarstvo Rossiyskaya*. According to Karamzin, the *Trinity Chronicle* carried its account down to the year 1408, ending with a description of the invasion of Emir Edigey.⁵⁶ It was also reflected in the chronicle edition of 1412, written in Tver (which formed the basis of the *Rogozhskiy* and *Simeonov* chronicles), and in the *Nikon Chronicle*.⁵⁷

Aleksey A. Shakhmatov (1864–1920), founder of comparative-textual methodology in the study of the Russian chronicles, suggested the possibility of reconstructing the *Trinity Chronicle* based on Karamzin's citations of it, which were identical to the wording of the *Simeonov Chronicle* over the period 1177–1390, except for the years 1235–7, 1239–49 and 1361–4, which were incorporated into the *Simeonov Chronicle* from a Moscow chronicle edition of 1480. M. D. Priselkov published a text reconstructed from Karamzin's quotations in 1950, also making use of an incomplete eighteenth-century publication of the *Primary Chronicle* by Chebotarev and Cherepanov. To fill the gaps in the direct quotations from Karamzin, Priselkov was forced to use other chronicles, mostly the *Simeonov*, *Rogozhskiy* and *Laurentian* chronicles, using a smaller font for these passages, to distinguish them from Karamzin's direct quotations.⁵⁸

Priselkov divided his work into four parts, the first two consisting of the earliest part of the *Trinity Chronicle*, which had not survived in the *Simeonov Chronicle*, extending from the beginning of the chronicle until the year 1177, where the *Simeonov Chronicle* begins. The reign of Aleksandr Nevskiy falls into the part which mostly follows the *Simeonov Chronicle*, although the latter had interpolated the Moscow edition of 1480 for the years 1239–49. For these years Priselkov had to turn to the *Laurentian Chronicle*.⁵⁹ The basic source which provides

⁵⁶ Edigey did not belong to family line of the ruling Mongol clan, the descendants of Ghengis Khan, and thus his title was not khan, but emir. See Tvorogov 1994, 76–7.

⁵⁷ See Priselkov 1950, 7–25.

⁵⁸ Priselkov 1950, 16, 42.

⁵⁹ Priselkov 1950, 41–2.

the foundation for the *Trinity Chronicle* is the same as that which forms the basis for the *Laurentian Chronicle*, the chronicle edition from the beginning of the 14th century (1305), but in some cases the *Trinity Chronicle* followed this mutual origin more accurately than the *Laurentian Chronicle*.⁶⁰ It was the last part that Priselkov had the most trouble in reconstructing, especially the years after 1391/2, upon which two of the most important sources, the *Simeonov* and *Rogozhkiy* chronicles, differed considerably.⁶¹

The *Trinity Chronicle* was probably written in the metropolitan's court soon after the death of Metropolitan Kiprian in 1406.⁶² It covers a time when Moscow was still far from being victorious in the unification of the Russian lands, and it ends with several descriptions of Moscow's failures, together with devastating sacks of the city, the last of which was the storm of Edigey in 1408, described on its very last pages. It is therefore interesting to study the overall concept of historical events that the *Trinity Chronicle* represents, especially as far as the descriptions of an ideal prince and his qualities are concerned.⁶³

The *Simeonov Chronicle* was compiled at the end of the 15th century and is extant in one sixteenth-century manuscript, owned by Nikifor Simeonov, from whom the chronicle derived its name. As already discussed, it remains very close to the *Trinity Chronicle* up to the year 1391. From the year 1410 onwards the *Simeonov Chronicle* follows the 1480 Moscow edition. Muscovite influence is also reflected in interpolations made in the first part of the chronicle, especially for the years 1235–7, 1239–49, 1361–4 and 1401–8, and it is from this Moscow edition of 1480 that the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was

⁶⁰ Lur'e, Letopis' Troitskaya 1989, 65–6.

⁶¹ Lur'e, Letopis' Troitskaya 1989, 65. Even though Kloss made some critical remarks on Priselkov's reconstruction, noting that 'the ultimate reconstruction cannot be accepted as reliable in every instance', he claimed that 'the text of the *Trinity Chronicle* permits us to make judgements about both its ideological direction and its author.' Lur'e also states that we can outline the character of the chronicle and its sources on the basis of Priselkov's reconstruction. Charles J. Halperin has recently criticised attempts to treat Priselkov's reconstruction as an extant source. He criticises Kloss, who insisted that the ideology and authorship of the *Trinity Chronicle* could be extracted from an analysis of its content and style. Halperin claimed that Kloss's attempt suffered from the ultimate conceit of treating the chronicle as an extant source. See Kloss 1994, 57–8; Lur'e, Letopis' Troitskaya 1989, 65; Halperin 2001, 253–4.

⁶² Lur'e, Letopis' Troitskaya 1989, 66.

⁶³ Ibid.

copied.⁶⁴ The information about Aleksandr Nevskiy in the *Trinity Chronicle* is given without using any passages from the *Life*, and therefore one cannot find any information about the battle of the Neva, while the Battle on the Ice is reported with only a short mention emphasising Prince Andrey's part in it, similar to the *Laurentian Chronicle*.⁶⁵ Clearly this also confirms the theory that the *Life* of Aleksandr was not contained in the chronicle edition of 1305, which the monk Lavrentiy copied, but was interpolated into the *Laurentian Chronicle* only by the monk Lavrentiy himself.

The *Trinity Chronicle* is a most interesting source when observing the development of the relationship between the great principality of Moscow and the merchant town of Novgorod. It includes bitter complaints at Novgorod's unwillingness to submit to the will of Great Prince Vasiliy Dmitrievich of Moscow in 1392. The chronicler explains the behaviour of the Novgorod citizenry:

That is the habit of the people of Novgorod. They often disagree with a great prince and dispute with him. They will not pay respect to him, but instead they are taciturn, obstinate and stubborn and do not adhere to the principles of law and order... Who among the princes would not become angry with them, and who would like to please them? For even the great Aleksandr Yaroslavich did not tolerate such behaviour.⁶⁶

This passage is concerned with the problems that Metropolitan Kiprian had with the people of Novgorod, who had declared their independence from Moscow in ecclesiastical matters. In particular, they refused to allow the metropolitan to hear appeals against the judgements of their own archbishop. Despite all his efforts, Kiprian failed to bring Novgorod to heel. Neither his pastoral visits to the city nor a stern rebuke from the patriarch of Constantinople could shake the citizens' determination to have their own way.⁶⁷

These troubles demonstrate the struggle that Moscow had in maintaining even the slightest hegemony over the Russian principalities soon after the battle of Kulikovo. The great prince of Moscow had little, if any, effective control over Novgorod, Tver, Nizhniy Novgorod, Suzdal or Ryazan, while the rulers of other Russian principalities

⁶⁴ Lur'e, *Letopis' Simeonovskaya* 1989, 56–7.

⁶⁵ *Troitskaya letopis'*, 321.

⁶⁶ *Troitskaya letopis'*, 439.

⁶⁷ Crummey 1987, 61–2.

showed increasing independence in their relations with Lithuania and the Horde in the late 14th and early 15th centuries, and often styled themselves as 'great princes'.⁶⁸ The *Trinity Chronicle* criticises the headstrong and stubborn people of Novgorod and draws attention to Aleksandr Nevskiy as an example of a prince who had to discipline these recalcitrant citizens.⁶⁹ This hostility reflects the desire of the Moscow princes to gain access to power in the city, and also the fact that Metropolitan Kiprian was not pleased with the independence of the Novgorod Church.

Even though the Moscow chronicle edition of 1408 did not contain the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, it did have its own peculiar way of adding to the medieval image of Aleksandr Yaroslavich. By combining a warm tone towards Aleksandr with antipathy towards the Mongols, the chronicle gave rise to a most curious combination of attitudes. In their entries for the year of Aleksandr's death, 1263, both the *Trinity* and the *Simeonov* chronicles claimed that his main virtues lay in his bravery in war and in his campaigns on behalf of the Christians against the pagan Mongols:

That year the death occurred of the honourable and Christ-loving Great Prince Aleksandr, son of Yaroslav, who showed great manliness in battle and struggled against the pagan Tatars for the good of the Christians. When, according to the will of God, his life was turning towards its end, God allowed him to come to Him with honour, on November 14th, on the day of Saint Philip. The ordinary hymns were sung, his body was buried in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God, and there was great weeping for him.⁷⁰

Since the interpolations from the *Life* of Aleksandr were added to the *Simeonov Chronicle* from the Moscow edition of 1480, it is obvious that they were absent from the chronicle edition of 1305, which was the basis of the *Laurentian Chronicle*, and from the Moscow edition of 1408, presented in the *Trinity Chronicle*. Aleksandr is said to have showed great manliness in battle, about which the *Trinity Chronicle* says nothing, since it did not make use of the *Life*. What struggles

⁶⁸ Crummey 1987, 56.

⁶⁹ *Troitskaya letopis'*, 438–9. The passage also reveals the source of the *Trinity Chronicle*, for the chronicler continues after the statement about the headstrong people of Novgorod and Aleksandr as their suppressor to reveal his source for these events, which was the *Letopisets' velikii rus'kii*, which told of the period from the days of the great Yaroslav all the way up to the 'present prince'.

⁷⁰ *Troitskaya letopis'*, 328; cf. *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 72.

with the Mongols did Aleksandr actually have, then? The sentence must refer to his humiliating negotiations with the Mongols, for like so many of the Russian princes in those times, Aleksandr too had to make several visits to pay homage to the khans or their representatives in the Horde.

It is interesting to compare the short necrology of Aleksandr Yaroslavich with those of the descendants of the Rostov family. That of the younger Rostov brother, Gleb Vasilkovich, who died in 1278, reads as follows:

That winter . . . Prince Gleb Vasilkovoch of Rostov died, at the age of 41 years. From his youth, after the attack by the pagan Tatars and the conquest of the Russian lands, he began to serve them, and helped many Christians whom they had insulted . . .⁷¹

Gleb apparently did the same as Aleksandr Nevskiy, but the choice of wording is quite the opposite; while Aleksandr struggled against the Mongols, Gleb served them. However, the result was the same: he helped Christians who were suffering under the Mongol burden. The chronicle states clearly that Prince Aleksandr and Prince Gleb made every effort to help the Christians as much as they could. Gleb is especially remembered for his love for the poor, orphans and widows, and for his generosity as a patron of the Church. The people of Rostov are described as lamenting the death of such a good prince.⁷² As the sacrificial helper of his people, the image of Gleb does not essentially differ from that of Aleksandr.

The *Trinity Chronicle* did not make use of the *Life* of Aleksandr, nor of the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov*, and presents its yearly accounts without any later additions taken from the hagiographic literature. It was composed some time after 1408, when the literary descriptions of Aleksandr and Mikhail were already well known, having been used in the *Laurentian Chronicle* in 1377. Thus, only the monk Lavrentiy at the monastery in Vladimir adopted the image of the ideal ruler as presented in the *Life* of Aleksandr into the chronicle he copied; not even the Moscow edition of 1408 did so. A further development of Aleksandr Nevskiy's heroic image in the Moscow chronicles took place only later, in the edition of 1480. It was around that time, too, at the end of the 15th century, that the *Life* was inserted into the Pskov chronicles.

⁷¹ *Troitskaya letopis'*, 335.

⁷² *Troitskaya letopis'*, 335–6.

The Pskov chronicles have survived in fifteenth- to seventeenth-century editions, and may be grouped into three editions, which vary to some extent in their political and ideological emphasis. According to Hans-Jürgen Grabmüller, chronicle writing in Pskov started in 1368, when the city began to use a calendar of its own, which deviated from the Novgorod calendar by one year.⁷³ The chronicles possess a strong local character, which causes them to stand out from the rest of the Russian chronicles by virtue of their staunch interest in the affairs of Pskov. The all-Russian perspective, which gained increasing weight even in the fifteenth-century chronicles of Novgorod, remained underdeveloped in Pskov.⁷⁴ The Pskov chronicles do not report great events which had huge significance from an all-Russian perspective, such as the battle on the River Kalka, Baty's invasion, or Dmitriy Donskoy's victory at Kulikovo Pole.

All the extant Pskov chronicles derive from one non-extant source, the official chronicle of Pskov, *Pskovskii letopisnyi svod*, written in the 1450s/60s under the authority of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. The *veche* chancellery and the depository (*lar'*), where all the most important documents were stored, were both under the supervision of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. According to Nasonov, the peculiar feature of the Pskov chronicles is that they cannot be classified either as princely chronicles, like those of Vladimir, Rostov, Tver and Moscow, or as archiepiscopal writings, like the Novgorod chronicles. Nasonov argues that the Pskov chronicles are *boyarsko-vechevye*, i.e. written under the auspices of the boyars and the town assembly.⁷⁵ A central position in the Pskov chronicles is occupied by local events such as the military expeditions with the Livonian Knights, affairs between Novgorod and Lithuania, the construction of churches and other public buildings in Pskov, the nominations of princes and mayors, famines, bad harvests, epidemics, omens in the sky, etc.

After the political catastrophe of the annexing of Pskov to Moscow's authority in 1510, its chronicle writing declined. Before that its chronicle tradition had divided into two branches, orientation with respect to Moscow's policies serving as the ideological watershed. In 1848–51 the editors of the series of Russian chronicles *Polnoe sobranie russkikh*

⁷³ Grabmüller 1975, 160–7.

⁷⁴ Nasonov 1955, 1–5.

⁷⁵ Nasonov 1955, 6.

letopisey published two chronicles, named simply the *Pskov I* and *Pskov II* chronicles. The *Pskov I Chronicle* was printed on the basis of several manuscripts, whereas the *Pskov II Chronicle* was extant in only one, the Synodal manuscript. A. N. Nasonov re-edited the Pskov chronicles between 1941 and 1955, including the hitherto unpublished Tikhonovskiy manuscript, and divided the chronicles into three groups: the *Pskov I Chronicle* (based on the Tikhonovskiy, Arkhivskiy 1, Arkhivskiy 3, Pogodinskiy 1, and Obolenskiy manuscripts); the *Pskov II Chronicle* (the Synodal manuscript), and the *Pskov III Chronicle* (the Stroeviskiy and Arkhivskiy 2 manuscripts).⁷⁶

Although the Tikhonovskiy manuscript itself is preserved only in a seventeenth-century copy, it represents the chronicle edition of 1469. The Pskovian chronicle edition of 1547 is contained in the Pogodinskiy and Obolenskiy manuscripts; it was compiled in the Monastery of Eleazar in Pskov. The Synodal manuscript (the *Pskov II Chronicle*) dates from the 1480s and contains additional material, including the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*.⁷⁷ Grabmüller presumed that the *Life* had been added to the *Pskov II Chronicle* at the end of the 15th century, when Pskov was an ally of Moscow as a means of escaping from the control of Novgorod, the ideological message of independence from Novgorod having been one of the reasons for its creation.⁷⁸ The Stroeviskiy manuscript of the *Pskov III Chronicle* was written in 1567 in the Monastery of Peshchera under the supervision of *igumen* Korniliy, and shows a stern contempt for the dominance of the great prince of Moscow over Pskov.⁷⁹

The *Pskov I Chronicle* also takes a very stubborn stand on behalf of Pskov's independence and is antagonistic towards the hegemony of Moscow.⁸⁰ With its concrete, coherent view of history, the *Pskov I*

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Nasonov 1955, 6.

⁷⁸ Grabmüller 1975, 169–213.

⁷⁹ Nasonov 1955, 6–7.

⁸⁰ Nasonov's reconstruction of the *Pskov I Chronicle* used the seventeenth-century Tikhonovskiy manuscript as its basis, representing the 1469 Pskovian chronicle edition. He filled its gaps from the Arkhivskiy I manuscript, which represents the 1481 edition but is extant only in a sixteenth-century manuscript. Both these manuscripts lack the beginning of the chronicle, as they start in the middle of the *Life of Dovmont*. The text of the Tikhonovskiy manuscript ends with the year 1469, after which Nasonov used the manuscript of Pogodinskiy, which takes events all the way to the coronation of Ivan IV in 1547. The rest of the *Pskov I Chronicle* is printed according to the Obolenskiy manuscript. This part describes the brutal sack of Novgorod by Tsar Ivan IV in 1569.

Chronicle supplies a most interesting and fascinating interpretation of the history of Pskov and Novgorod under pressure from Moscow and the constant threat on their western frontiers. Although the Pskov chronicles distinguish themselves by their clear vision of world history, and although their viewpoint is formed on the basis of the geographical situation—regarding Novgorod as the Great Lord among all the Russian cities and the hope of Russia⁸¹—their writing is occasionally very different from the dry laconism of the Novgorod chronicles.

The relationship between Novgorod and Pskov has been a topic of scholarly discussion for a long time. It is often stated that Pskov was one of the satellite towns of Novgorod, but on the other hand, its special position has also been acknowledged. It enjoyed a close relationship with the prosperous merchant town of Novgorod, the bond connecting the two being their archbishop. Thus Pskov's independence from the guardianship of Novgorod has often been given as one of the main reasons for the beginning of an independent chronicle tradition in Pskov. Pskov had popular military cults of its own, one of its most popular heroes being Prince Dovmont (Daumantas), of Lithuanian origin. Grabmüller suggested that the *Life of Dovmont* was inserted into the Pskov chronicle edition of 1368, and that the *Life of Aleksandr* may have been in there too. Although Grabmüller's theories regarding the chronicle tradition and its development in Pskov are usually accepted, there is no textual evidence to support his views, since the earliest extant manuscripts of the Pskov chronicles date back only to the end of the 15th century, and it is the edition of 1469 that is recognised as the oldest version of the *Pskov I Chronicle*, represented by the Tikhanovskiy manuscript. This manuscript contains the *Life of Dovmont*, but not the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*.⁸² The first Pskov chronicle to present the *Life of Aleksandr* is the Synodal manuscript of *Pskov II*, dated to the end of the 15th century and representing the chronicle edition of 1486.

The historical narrative of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* also filtered into the Novgorod chronicles during the 15th century, as it was interpolated into the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*. The 15th century is usually characterised as the heyday of chronicle writing in Novgorod, especially the first half of the century. Chronicle writing

⁸¹ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 122.

⁸² Okhotnikova, *Letopisi Pskovskie* 1989, 28. See Grabmüller 160–7.

there was influenced from 1423 onwards by Archbishop Feodosiy Klopskiy, and it was during his tenure that many new entries were added to the *Novgorod I Chronicle* for the period 1204–51. Among these new entries was the *Life* of Aleksandr, which was divided among the years 6748 (1240), 6750 (1242), 6754 (1246) and 6759 (1251).⁸³ The younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* has survived in several manuscripts, the oldest of which is the Komissionnyi manuscript, dated to the 1450s or 60s.⁸⁴

The interest lies in the way in which the image of a legend, as represented by the hagiographic *Life*, affected the historical content of the chronicles, seeking to recognise the main lines and influences that can be reconstructed from the sources left to us. The youngest version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* is the earliest example of the influence of the *Life* intermingled with the yearly chronicle passages. The discussion will therefore continue by examining how the passages from the *Life* were incorporated into the *Novgorod I Chronicle* somewhere around the 1420s or 30s.⁸⁵

The insertions were made to cover Aleksandr's lifespan, and the entire narrative of the *Life* was interpolated, mixed with earlier chronicle accounts. The first interpolation applies to 1240, the year of the Neva battle, at which point the whole hagiographic introduction was inserted, comprising the whole of the *Life* from the beginning to the end of the Neva campaign, during which the narrative of the *Life*'s First Edition was interrupted only a few times, when local information from the old *Novgorod I Chronicle* was included.⁸⁶ Thus the chronicle now offered more information, particularly on Andreash's journey and the motives of the Swedish kings, which was lacking from the earlier, contemporary passage. The *Life* also seemed to gain more information, since the chronicler also preserved information from the earlier chronicle passages.

Thus the hagiographic insertions increased the information content of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, intermingling an old chronicle account with a frame of hagiographic interpolation. The combination was done with great wit and skill, so that the old information in no way distracted from or perverted the hagiographic war story. The old

⁸³ Bobrov 2001, 89; Gippius, 1997, 70.

⁸⁴ Begunov 1959, 231.

⁸⁵ Bobrov 2001, 89; Gippius 1997, 70.

⁸⁶ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', mladshii izvod*, 289–294.

account of the coming of the Swedes with their prince and bishop, for instance, was placed logically after the story of how the king from the Land of Midnight had become jealous on hearing of Aleksandr's reputation.⁸⁷ In this way the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* sought to combine the information from both sources.

It was now stated that the Swedish *vovoda* Spiridon and the bishop were killed during a separate engagement with Gavriil Oleksitch, the first of the six brave men,⁸⁸ and that the Swedes killed in the battle of the Neva were buried in three ships and the rest in large holes, a detail inserted from an earlier chronicle passage. On the same pattern, the Battle on the Ice was presented according to the *Life*, but with added information from the older version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* on the 500 Germans killed and the 50 hostages captured.⁸⁹ The hagiographic insertions ended in 1242 with the notion of the spread of Aleksandr's fame to far-away countries.

The narrative of the *Life* was resumed again in 1246, when the confrontation with Khan Baty was interpolated, directly after another interpolation, the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov*. This caused a chronological error, however, in that Aleksandr was described as visiting the Horde twice during the year 1247, as the same event came later in a traditional chronicle passage. A significant change in Aleksandr's image had already begun to take shape, too, as represented by the epithets attached to him: while he was mentioned simply as 'Prince Aleksandr' in the First Edition of the *Life*, the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* called him a 'Russian prince' (*Russkii knyaz'*) and, since his journey brought him considerable fame, the chronicle also called him an awesome prince, *groznyy knyaz'*.⁹⁰

Apparently Aleksandr's dealings with Khan Baty form a part of the *Life* in which the chronicler chose to emphasise his role as a prince of Russia. The Synodal manuscript had already noted his efforts on behalf of the land of Russia in his necrology, which was obviously on account of his efforts in the Horde.⁹¹ The passage for 1251 that tells of Baty's anger towards Aleksandr's brother Andrey uses other sources than the *Life*, as it reveals: 'At that time Nevruy

⁸⁷ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', mladshii izvod*, 191.

⁸⁸ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', mladshii izvod*, 293.

⁸⁹ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', mladshii izvod*, 296.

⁹⁰ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', mladshii izvod*, 304.

⁹¹ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 84.

arrived in the Land of Suzdal to chase after Prince Andrey, and the prince fled beyond the sea and was killed there.⁹² Although the narrative of the *Life* has been totally abandoned in this particular case, the chronicle still follows up the information on Nevruy's raid with a proclamation of the acts of an ideal prince, as Aleksandr is presented as the rebuilder of his desolated country, comforting people and distributing charity as well as restoring law and order.⁹³

Just as, at some time in the 1420s or 30s, the compiler of the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* had started insertions for the year 1240 with a larger interpolation, incorporating the whole of the beginning of the *Life* into a single chronicle passage, he also ended it with a large interpolation. This was for the year 1251, where the entire content of the second part of the *Life* was inserted. Not only were Aleksandr's dealings with Khan Baty described in this passage, but also the arrival of the envoys from the pope and Aleksandr's death. Thus chronological errors were again unavoidable. Both accounts of Aleksandr's death contain an expression implying that he was the protector not only of Novgorod and Pskov, but of the whole of Russia, a notion which had already been put forward in the older version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*.⁹⁴ The hagiographic insertion for the year 1251 ends after the description of Aleksandr's funeral, with the comment, 'And thus God honoured His favourite, who suffered much affliction on behalf of Novgorod and Pskov, and who gave his life for the strength of the whole of Russia.'⁹⁵ The same idea is also stated in the passage for 1262, where his death is announced: 'Dear God, let him see Your face in the future together with all Your saints, for he gave his life for Novgorod and for the whole of Russia.'⁹⁶

The younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* demonstrates how the *Life* of Aleksandr started to affect the common historical consciousness, the images of the past. With its information from the old chronicle accounts, it augmented the *Life* with the local information it possessed, and thus placed the events described in the *Life* into the known historical framework. When the *Life* was inserted into the

⁹² *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, mladshii izvod, 304.

⁹³ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, mladshii izvod, 305.

⁹⁴ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, starshii izvod, 84; *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, mladshii izvod 306.

⁹⁵ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, mladshii izvod, 306.

⁹⁶ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, mladshii izvod, 313.

chronicles, Aleksandr's image as an ideal prince acquired the status of a historical narrative, which ultimately had the effect of presenting the past in a different light. It was now possible to look back on the historical past with much more information than previously, especially since both important princely lives—those of Mikhail of Chernigov and Aleksandr of Suzdal—were concerned with the ideal behaviour of a prince during times of crisis. With these additions the old chronicle was directed onto new tracks and the concepts of both religious and communal self-sacrifice gained ground little by little. This development was even more clearly crystallised in two of the most splendid chronicles of the 15th century, the *Novgorod IV* and *Sophia I* chronicles.

As the *Life* of Aleksandr started to affect the content of the fifteenth-century Novgorod chronicles, the image of Aleksandr also went through a process of development. A very interesting chronicle, which represents the earliest stages when the local chronicle of Novgorod was combined with the all-Russian chronicle accounts, is the *Karamzin Chronicle*. It was published only recently, in 2002, when the present work was nearly finished. It is, however, too important a chronicle to be left out of this discussion totally, and therefore a few words must be said about it. The oldest part of the chronicle is the middle section, which was written at the end of the 15th century, or at the beginning of the 16th. This oldest surviving section is divided into two parts (NK I and NK II), which represent parallel years, but with fairly different accounts. The first part of the *Karamzin Chronicle* (NK I) does not mention the heroic deeds of Aleksandr Yaroslavich at all. It has no accounts of the battle of the Neva or the Battle on the Ice.⁹⁷ Likewise, Dovmont of Pskov has not been given any special events; neither has the later Kulikovo hero Dmitriy Donskoy. Instead, the second part of the chronicle (NK II) has heroic insertions from the lives and legends of the above-mentioned princes. The treatment of the *Life* of Aleksandr is similar to that given in the *Novgorod IV Chronicle*, except that there is no mention of Jarl Birger.⁹⁸ The *Novgorod IV Chronicle* used as its basis the existing tradition as presented by the *Novgorod I* and *Karamzin* chronicles, and has survived in two editions, the older one extending to the year 1437 and the younger to 1447; it even continues further in some manuscripts.

⁹⁷ *Novgorodskaya Karamzinskaya letopis'*, 84.

⁹⁸ *Novgorodskaya Karamzinskaya letopis'*, 115–17, 119, 138–44.

The older and younger editions are similar up to the year 1428, and A. G. Bobrov argues that their mutual source was probably written at the request of Archbishop Evfemiy II during the years 1430–1, although this was also influenced by the chronicle of the metropolitan, written in Moscow.⁹⁹ It is generally argued that the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* used the same chronicle source as the *Sophia I Chronicle*, a non-extant hypothetical chronicle which is usually dated to the 1430s/40s, or even as late as 1448.¹⁰⁰

The *Novgorod IV Chronicle* begins its hagiographic borrowings with the events at the Neva in 1240. The manner in which the hagiographic entry from the *Life* of Aleksandr was taken into the chronicle passage for the year 1240 was the same as in both the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* and the *Sophia I Chronicle*, but there were also totally new sources, since the chronicle brings out extra information which was not known to any of the earlier chronicles. In particular, the new sources were used to reconstruct the historical narrative of the battle of the Neva. The king of the Swedes is presented as ‘the Roman King Bergel, from the Land of Midnight’,¹⁰¹ who gathered a large military force consisting of princes and bishops of Sweden, Murmans, Finns and Tavastians, and filled his ships with this large body of men.¹⁰² Historians have argued up to this day whether it was Jarl Birger who confronted Aleksandr at the Neva, for this in particular would have given the battle at the Neva great significance as a crusade. Therefore, the confrontation between Jarl Birger and Aleksandr Nevskiy was an important feature which now gave a very different emphasis to Prince Aleksandr’s mission at the Neva.

The highlighted crusading fervour which the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* underlined in its passages on the role of Aleksandr Yaroslavich was echoed in Sweden. As in Russia, the literature of Sweden in the Middle Ages was in many ways shaped by political events. One of the most interesting examples, the *Chronicle of Erik* (*Erikskrönikan*) might be called the greatest original work of medieval Swedish literature. It is the oldest extant Swedish poem, consisting of 4543 verses. It was written from the aristocratic point of view, using both historical

⁹⁹ Bobrov 2001, 165–70. See Lur’e, *Letopis’ Novgorodskaya* 1989, 51–2.

¹⁰⁰ See Lur’e 1976, 104–9; Gippius 1997; Bobrov 2001, 63–4

¹⁰¹ *Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis’*, 35.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

and propagandistic levels in its narration. The chronicle, named after Duke Erik, covers the period from c.1220 to the royal election in 1319, and is obviously aimed at claiming right and justice for the new king, Magnus Eriksson, son of Duke Erik. This text forms much of our knowledge of the period and is one of the landmarks of Swedish literature of that era. The chronicle can be dated only with difficulty, since the oldest extant manuscripts are all fifteenth-century copies. The details in the text suggest that it was composed around 1320, after the death of Magnus Birgersson. Some scholars are convinced that the text has a more concrete political aim, and they are willing to date its birth to the beginning of Magnus Eriksson's rule in 1332.¹⁰³ The narrative of the chronicle is divided into several major events, which are not necessarily described in chronological order. In many instances the author has neglected the chronological facts for the artistic unity of the story.¹⁰⁴

Although the *Chronicle of Erik* represents an important innovation in Swedish learned culture—a rhymed chronicle combining the new literary verse form with annalistic writings—it has precedents in other European literatures. The genre of rhymed chronicles had already been extensively developed in Germany, France and England. It was presumably under the influence of the flourishing German tradition of rhymed chronicles and the presence of large numbers of Germans within Swedish borders at this time that the new style was transferred to Swedish materials, presented in the Swedish language. The author also employed Swedish annals and ‘death notices’ (*dödsnotiser*), which were often incorporated into the annals.¹⁰⁵

The *Chronicle of Erik* begins by remembering the reign of King Erik, ‘who had the whole country under his power’.¹⁰⁶ In February 1250 King Erik died and his sister's son, Valdemar Birgersson, son of Birger (later earl, in Swedish *jarl*), was elected to be the next king. During this *kungaval* in 1250, according to Erik's chronicle, Birger was on a crusade in Finland. The dating of this crusade against the

¹⁰³ Gisela Vilhelmsdotter argues for the earlier dating, 1220–1. Vilhelmsdotter 1999, 24–36. Seppo Suvanto argues that, based on its style, the author had himself been one of the Swedish participants on the expedition to the River Neva in 1300, and suggests that the chronicle could have been written by Matias Ketilmundsson in the castle of Turku in 1324–6. Suvanto 1985, 33.

¹⁰⁴ See Lind 1991, 283–91.

¹⁰⁵ Mitchell 1996, 27–8.

¹⁰⁶ *Erikskrönikan*, rhyme 2.

heathen Tavastians has long been under scholarly discussion, for the crusade is also connected to the crusade bull of Gregory IX, given in 1237.¹⁰⁷ Debate about the leader of the crusade has been another subject of active discussion. Birger has been connected to not only the Finnish crusade but also—since the nineteenth-century Russian historian Nikolai Karamzin—to the events of 1240 at the Neva.¹⁰⁸ However, the fact is that, during the battle of the Neva in 1240, Birger was not yet a *jarl*; this was his cousin Ulf Fase, who died in 1247/8.¹⁰⁹

Lind discussed this matter quite thoroughly, and pointed out that the whole theory opposing Birger as leader of the crusade in Tavastia was based on the idea that Birger at that time was not a *jarl*, as if only a *jarl* could have taken the leadership of this kind of *leding* operation. However, it has been noted that someone leading a *leding* operation abroad could also be a *forman*, which Birger was at the time; this was also the title which the *Chronicle of Erik* gave him. Thus it is perfectly possible that Birger, one of the most prominent and active men in the Swedish political arena, led the expedition to Finland against the Tavastians.¹¹⁰

The *Chronicle of Erik* depicts a series of military expeditions directed towards the pagan Tavastians, Karelians and Russians. From the three expeditions given in the chronicle, the first (later labelled as the Second Crusade), against the Tavastians, is presented without any battle description which might depict real events from the historical scene. The chronicle's account is a well-narrated episode composed by using the courtly epic. If compared to the later military expeditions in Karelia, it lacks the realistic details of the battles, which caused Gisela Vilhelmsdotter to suggest that it had other purposes than to depict historical events. In its lack of real detail it is closer to the *Legend of Erik* (*Erikslegenden*), the description of St Erik's crusade, which took place a century earlier. Thus the chronicler's political aim was to elevate the future king's father by making a comparison between him and St Erik.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Finlands medeltida urkunder, vol. 1, 29–30.

¹⁰⁸ Karamzin 1842, book I, vol. IV, 17–18. See Shaskol'skiy 1978, 171.

¹⁰⁹ Pipping 1926, 79; Shaskol'skiy 1978, 178. See Lind 1991, 279–83; Cederschiöld 1899, 35.

¹¹⁰ Lind 1991, 278–95.

¹¹¹ Vilhelmsdotter 1999, 56–62. See also her earlier article under the name Nordstrandh 1990, 9–31. The legend of St Erik (1153–60) relates the events of the

In Vilhelmsdotter's opinion, Birger's crusade against the Tavastians in the *Chronicle of Erik* should be considered as the creation of the narrator's rhetorical *inventio*.¹¹² Lind agrees with her on the nature of the source and its literary and political aims, but suspects that the writer would hardly invent the whole episode from his own imagination; more likely he embellished the historical event, giving it the place and significance that he aimed at.¹¹³ Thus the first episode, describing the campaign against Tavastia, is an expression of mythic heroism and idealism which the following two battle descriptions used as their model; in it is presented the ideological message of chivalry and defending the right faith. From the rhetorical point of view, it was essential for the narrator to maintain the sympathy of the audience and gain their approval for the events that happened after the first idealistic crusade expedition. The first crusade expedition was thus presented as *bellum iustum*, which gave the audience the opportunity to associate the later events with the same ideological battle.¹¹⁴

The so-called Third Crusade was led successfully by the marshal of Sweden, Torgils Knutsson, in 1292/3. The castle of Viborg, constructed in Karelia in 1293, was to remain as a Swedish stronghold in the east for many centuries. The Swedish forces continued their offensive as far as the estuary of the River Neva, where the small fortress of Landskrona was built. Keksholm, on the western shore of Lake Ladoga, was also under Swedish control for a short period. All this is described in the *Chronicle of Erik* in detail and in a realistic way, and it is a primary Swedish source for these events.¹¹⁵

The Swedes are described as Christians, while their enemies are described as pagans, a term that could imply Orthodox Russians as well as non-Christian Karelians. The primary aim of the organisers of the Swedish 'crusade'—there exists no papal crusading bull confirming this—was to gain territorial control over the northern shore of the Gulf of Finland, and the strategically important Neva estuary.

so-called First Crusade in Finland in the 1150s. The legend describes Erik's expedition with Bishop Henrik to defeat the stubborn Finns and baptise them. The legend was, however, created only in the late 13th century by the chapter of Uppsala cathedral and was evidently supported by members of the local aristocracy. Lindkvist 2001, 122–3.

¹¹² Vilhelmsdotter 1999, 56–62.

¹¹³ Lind 1991, 292–3, note 83.

¹¹⁴ Vilhelmsdotter 1999, 62–3.

¹¹⁵ *Erikskrönikan*, rhyme 2.

According to Thomas Lindkvist, the legends of St Erik and St Henrik were written in the second half of the 13th century as a contribution to legitimise the Swedish offensive in the east. In order to give weight to claims in Karelia, Finland had to be regarded as an old Swedish crusading area.¹¹⁶

However, there are no traces which could confirm that the Swedish aristocracy believed in the nature of the eastern expeditions as real crusades. The Swedish 'crusades' were of a different character to those of the Teutonic Order and those in the Holy Land. No vows were taken to participate in crusades against pagans on the eastern frontier of the Swedish realm, while the crusading areas mentioned in the testaments of the aristocracy were the Holy Land and the lands of the Teutonic Order. Despite this, the idea of the crusade was used in literature such as the *Chronicle of Erik* or *Legends of St Erik* and St Henrik to legitimise the wars on the eastern frontier, and the model of a Swedish crusader king was created in St Erik.¹¹⁷

Whether Jarl Birger can be considered a crusader or not, the truth is, that the *Chronicle of Erik* is silent about the Swedish defeat at the Neva in 1240, and therefore we have no information about their leader from the Swedish side. As the Swedes were a growing threat in the Karelian isthmus, especially around the year 1300, the fame of Jarl Birger, who apparently became a sort of hero for the Swedes, was also well known in Novgorod. Therefore it is probable that the fifteenth-century chronicler added his name as the antagonist of Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich in his battle of the Neva in 1240.

The *Novgorod IV Chronicle* is the first source, however, to name the Swedish king as 'Bergel'.¹¹⁸ The name of 'Bergel' as Aleksandr's adversary is also repeated in the famous *Testament of the Swedish King Magnus* (*Rukopisanie Magnusha, korolya sveyskogo*), a fifteenth-century pamphlet which was included in the chronicles. The *Testament* appears for the first time in the *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles, and was in all likelihood created in Novgorod at the beginning of the 15th century,¹¹⁹ although the confrontation presented in it was not so much between Sweden and Novgorod as between Sweden and Russia.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Lindkvist 2001, 124–5.

¹¹⁷ Lindkvist 2001, 129–30.

¹¹⁸ To be precise, of the seven existing copies of the *Novgorod IV Chronicle*, the name Bergel is mentioned only in the three latest ones. See Shaskol'skiy 1978, 172–3.

¹¹⁹ Demkova 1981, 537.

¹²⁰ Kagan 1989, 313.

In the chronicle, the Swedish King Magnus is presented as posing a religious challenge in the year 6855 (1347). He invites the people of Novgorod to a contest in which Orthodox Russia and Catholic Sweden will send their wisest philosophers to discuss matters of faith; the loser in the debate will abandon his religion, and adopt the better one.¹²¹ The era was one of religious fervour in Sweden, too, where the crusader spirit was highly elevated by Birgitta, who was later canonised. As Russian counter-propaganda, the *Testament of the Swedish King Magnus* is presented as a continuum to King Magnus's philosophical search for religious truth, dated to one year later, in 6856 (1348).¹²² The *Sophia I Chronicle* places the *Testament* in the year 1352.¹²³

The *Testament* is alleged to have been the will of the Swedish King Magnus Eriksson (1319–63), who made a military expedition against Novgorod in 1348. The introduction recounts its essential content:

I, Prince Magnus, King of Sweden, who was given the name Grigoriy in holy baptism, knowing that my time has come, hereby write my testament and order my children and my brothers and the whole Swedish land: Do not attack Russia if you have kissed a cross, for this will do you no good.¹²⁴

Magnus first takes a brief look back over the history of Swedish relations with Novgorod and mentions the battle of the Neva, where Aleksandr Nevskiy confronted Jarl Birger, wounded him and slew large numbers of Swedish troops. After a few more periods of fighting and peace, Magnus comes to his own times, and to his own fatal expedition of 1348 to Karelia, which ended with the destruction of the Swedish army. The story is put into the mouth of King Magnus himself, who in the *Testament* declares eternal peace with the Russians.¹²⁵ The Russian princes mentioned in the *Testament* as fighting successfully against the intruders are all members of the dynasty of Moscow, with Aleksandr Nevskiy representing their earliest example. M. D. Kagan makes a good point in arguing that the *Testament* could have been written especially for an all-Russian compilation, since it fits in perfectly with the idea of uniting the forces of Russia.¹²⁶ Thus the

¹²¹ *Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'*, 58; cf. *Novgorodskaya tret'ya letopis'*, 226–7.

¹²² *Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'*, 59.

¹²³ *Sofyiskaya pervaya letopis'*, 227.

¹²⁴ *Rukopisanie Magnusha*, 58.

¹²⁵ *Rukopisanie Magnusha*, 58–60.

¹²⁶ Kagan 1989, 313.

heroic image of Aleksandr Nevskiy was harnessed to the ideological battle against Catholic Sweden during the 15th century. He was made one of the key figures defending the borders of Russia against Catholic intruders.

The eternal peace between the Swedes and the Russians claimed by the *Testament* of King Magnus was nevertheless confused later. The Obolenskiy manuscript, which continues the *Pskov I Chronicle* all the way up to the beginning of the 17th century, draws a fascinating summary of the relationship between past and present, giving an in-depth view of the history of Russia and the role of Novgorod and Pskov in it. After Russia had sunk into continuous wars during its time of troubles, the whole history of the north-west frontier lands was viewed against this background. The passage begins with the title, 'About the previous and present-day battles against the *Nemtsy* in the land of Novgorod, the offensive of the repulsive Swedish King Gustav and the pagan Latins directed at the Russian land, and their oath'.¹²⁷

The story of the battles against the *Nemtsy* in the *Pskov I Chronicle* begins with an insult directed against the Swedes, who are described as 'rude and not very wise, who are ignored even by the *Chud*, who until these days have populated the lands east of them'.¹²⁸ The chronicler also defames their king, Gustav Vasa, who is said to be nothing but a common thief who 'after robbing and besieging foreign cities became rich and started to call himself a king'.¹²⁹ Next comes a description of the peace that reigned in the Russian lands before the siege mounted by Khan Baty. 'There was peace and love among all the Russian cities and among the princes, and among all the population. They lived according to the laws of the Lord, and God protected them from the attacks of the pagan Tatars and Latins, and they all lived in safety and exuberance and in peace and quiet'.¹³⁰ Then follows a description of how this idyll came to an end:

But in the Russian lands, with people who lived in sin, there was envy and hatred among the princes, and they arose against one another . . . and they broke their vows and the laws of their grandfathers. Then the Lord God raised pagans from all countries against them, just as He

¹²⁷ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 117.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

had raised pagans against Jerusalem and the City of the Emperor [Constantinople]. The godless Tsar Baty came from the eastern lands, he came with an enormous number of soldiers and conquered all of the Russian lands, and Lithuania and Hungary. He failed to enter Great Novgorod, but was halted 100 *vershs* from it with the help of the prayers of the Immaculate Mother of God and the holy miracle-workers.¹³¹

Then comes a passage recalling the earlier attacks of the Swedes:

In those times there ruled in great Novgorod a glorious, orthodox great prince of Novgorod and Pskov, Aleksandr Yaroslavich, who was famous in all countries, brave, mild-minded and beautiful as Joseph.¹³²

This is followed by a brief description of the godless Baty admiring Aleksandr's beauty and tall appearance, after which the narrative becomes a mixture of historical events and a popular pamphlet. The chronicler has merged two famous pieces of literature of his time that belonged to the stories of Novgorod: Aleksandr's battle against the Swedes at the Neva in 1240 and King Magnus's *Testament*:

In those times, when Aleksandr was in the Horde paying his homage to the khan, the pagan Swedes came to the lands of Novgorod for the first time, when their King Magnus arrived with many ships in Orekhov, desiring to capture Novgorod.¹³³

The story of the battles of Russia is full of mistakes in dates, years, and in historical context. Nevertheless, although the historical context of Aleksandr's battles was blurred in the 16th century, the image of him as an ultimate protector of the Russian lands was consolidated and attached to the historical past.

Aleksandr's deeds are depicted in a summary of the accounts given in his hagiographic *Life* and in the famous *Testament of the Swedish King Magnus*. The narrative continues with a short description of the battle of the Neva, which repeats only the most conventional features of the incident: how Aleksandr entered the battle with only a small proportion of his troops and how victory was achieved with the help of God: 'The pagan *Nemtsy* were horrified, and the Swedish King Magnus wrote a letter in which he swore that until the end of the world he would never again wage war in Russia . . .'¹³⁴ Eternal

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 118.

peace was thus concluded between the Swedes and Novgorod after Aleksandr's victory—at least in the popular historical consciousness—when the two historical narratives, the legend of the battle of the Neva from the *Life* of Aleksandr and the *Testament* of King Magnus, became confused in the seventeenth-century chronicle.

The *Pskov I Chronicle* offers an example of how popular images distorted historical information. This tendency did not, however, take place in Pskov only, as the same process was going on in Novgorod, too. The *Novgorod IV Chronicle* was eager to present popular legends of the history of Novgorod and its relationship with the neighbouring Swedes. In its own peculiar way the chronicle was directed in a propagandist manner at the Swedes. In its story of the battle of the Neva, Aleksandr is described as becoming enraged when he heard of King Bergel's large army approaching his land, so that he went to confront the Swedish king with his smaller detachment on 25 July.¹³⁵ The conventions governing the battle are again different from those in the hagiographic *Life*. Important features mentioned in the original *Life* are passed over, such as the significant detail that Aleksandr had no patience to wait for recruits sent by his father. Likewise, Aleksandr goes into battle with no prayers or blessings, and in the end even the date of the battle, 25 July, is different from that quoted in the First Edition of the *Life* and in the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, 15 July.¹³⁶ This different date means that the connection between the day of the Neva battle and the feast-day of St Vladimir, the prince who baptised the Russian lands, was lost. The original *Life* of Aleksandr was brilliant with his prayers and speeches to his men, emphasising that God is on the side of the righteous, but the description in the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* almost totally ignores the aspect of religious devotion.

Although the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* did not describe the actual battle in the manner of the *Life*, it did include the vision of Pelgusiy. The importance of Boris and Gleb seems to be at the core of the Neva battle and it is not left aside. The battle takes place, and Aleksandr wounds King Bergel on the face with his sharp spear. The deeds of the six brave men are also given, and the Swedish chieftain Spiridon and the bishop are reported as being killed, as

¹³⁵ *Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'*, 35.

¹³⁶ See *Povesti o zhitiï*, 188; *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 77.

was the case in the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, combined with the combat of Aleksandr's brave men.¹³⁷ The miracle of the angel killing the Swedes on the opposite side of the river is reported, but with no references to its biblical origin in the deeds of Hezekiah. The reference found in the Novgorod chronicles to the corpses of the Swedes being loaded onto three ships and drowned in the sea while the rest of the corpses were buried in large pits is included.¹³⁸

After the Neva sequence, the interpolations from the *Life* of Aleksandr stop, as the following passages relate events in Pskov and the siege of Kiev by Khan Mengu. The local events in Pskov are presented in a detailed manner, and the siege of Kiev follows the southern Russian sources, also found in the *Hypatian Chronicle*. Then the emphasis turns again to local events, which are repeated without any hagiographic conventions from the *Life* of Aleksandr. Thus the famous battle on Lake Peypus is described with no miracles or ideological pathos, but is simply based on the oldest accounts in the *Novgorod I Chronicle*. It is also stated in a realistic manner that after the battle on the lake, peace was made and prisoners were exchanged. Aleksandr's second visit to Khan Baty in 1246 is similarly described without hagiographic conventions, laying no emphasis on Aleksandr's fame, as was done in the *Life*. Given the dry manner of the narration in the *Novgorod IV Chronicle*, it is no wonder that the famous martyr Prince Mikhail of Chernigov is also passed over, with only a brief mention of his death in the Horde.¹³⁹

Thus many of the conventions of the *Life*, which sought to present Aleksandr as an ideal and pious prince, are totally ignored in the *Novgorod IV Chronicle*. There is no emphasis on his fine appearance or great fame, apart from the Neva conventions, which mention that the news of Aleksandr's fine appearance reached the ears of the Roman king. The chronicle pays little attention to Nevruy's raid or to Andrey's escape to Sweden, and since interest in the hagiographic *Life* is restricted mainly to the battle of the Neva, Aleksandr is not presented as a rebuilder of churches or as a comforter of his people, as the chronicle is not interested in describing the rebuilding

¹³⁷ *Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'*, 36.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'*, 38.

of the city of Vladimir.¹⁴⁰ His death is also mentioned in a dry manner, without any hagiographic conventions and only a brief account of how he died as a schema monk on 14 November, after a reign of 10 years.¹⁴¹

The image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* is very much bound into the ideological setting of confronting the Swedes on the borders of Novgorod. As the image is that of a defender, the emphasis ultimately lies on Aleksandr's valour and his capability of preserving the borders clear of outside menace. His success in defeating the enemy which was expanding to the Neva tributary was later commemorated in the ideological pamphlet exalting Russia's Orthodox religion, King Magnus's *Testament*. In nature, Aleksandr's heroic image was down-to-earth and practical, concentrating on the virtues of military defence. During the period when the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* with its archaic military image of Aleksandr was written, another aspect was added to his image. This was the great emphasis on sacrificial Russian heroes, contrasted with the foreign threat.

In conclusion, we can observe the significant detail in which the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* differs from all the other fifteenth-century Novgorod chronicles; there is no talk of a Russian prince when Aleksandr is mentioned. No doubt this goes hand in hand with the lack of any idealisation of his role in the service of his people, as was the case in the other Novgorod chronicles. Thus his image differs considerably from that of a voluntary sufferer, a servant of his people who suffered great affliction in the Golden Horde. In the next chapter the survey deals with this self-sacrificial image, which grew in tandem with the use of the epithet 'Russian prince'.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ *Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'*, 39.

2. ADAPTING ANTI-MONGOL IMAGES

2.1. *The earthly image of the military leader attached to the Life of Dovmont*

The 13 manuscripts of the First Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr show some minor differences and variations, which are mostly due to the work of each individual copyist. Occasional errors or different usage in spelling are natural considering that the legend lived in the hands of the monks who made new copies from the old ones. Some details of the content of the First Edition—like the leadership of the Yur'ev expedition—have even been seen as a reason for the classification of the *Life*, done by Begunov, as discussed earlier. However, these variations are relatively small, and had no effect on the image of Aleksandr, whose life was reported in it quite faithfully. These 13 manuscripts show remarkably well the tendency to preserve the content of the text, and it was only the *Pskov II Chronicle* that deviated from this accurate copying by leaving out of its version of the *Life* some details from the Neva battle.

Major changes in content and style, however, marked the rise of a totally new edition. The Second Edition¹ of the *Life* of Aleksandr has survived in only six sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscripts, and its emergence and origins have not been satisfactorily resolved, although many suggestions have been made. Just as the First Edition found its way into the *Laurentian*, *Pskov* and *Novgorod* chronicles, it was the *Sophia I Chronicle* which carried the first passages of the totally new Second Edition, and these passages have naturally been of prime importance in dating it. This chapter will focus on the image of Aleksandr projected by the Second Edition and the ways in which this influenced the overall historical image of Aleksandr Nevskiy as it found its way into the pages of the chronicles.

Mansikka had dated the Second Edition from the second half of the 15th century to the middle of the 16th century, but before

¹ Mansikka and Begunov referred to the new edition as the Second Edition (*Vtoraya redaktsiya*), while Serebryanskiy used the term 'special edition' (*Osobaya redaktsiya*). See Okhotnikova 1987, 357–8.

Metropolitan Makariy's time and its new literary trends.² Serebryanskiy was anxious to correct Mansikka's assumptions that the Second Edition was written as a hagiographic tale according to the passages in the *Sophia I Chronicle*. He argued that the Second Edition was written in the 14th century, most probably in Novgorod, and was used as a source for the interpolations of the description of Aleksandr in the *Sophia I Chronicle*.³ Begunov rejected Serebryanskiy's arguments on the early date of the Second Edition, although he admitted that it must have been in existence before the *Sophia I Chronicle* was written. Nevertheless, it was in his opinion created in the 1430s solely to meet the needs of the chronicle.⁴

Since no proper textual research has ever been conducted on it,⁵ it is obvious that the exact date of the origin of the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr remains unsolved. Concerning its links to the possible non-extant models of the *Life*, it has even been suggested that its origins lie in the background of the whole military legend of Aleksandr Yaroslavich. The secular way of depicting the manliness of a warrior has aroused many speculations regarding the possible origins of the *Life* among the circle of Aleksandr's warriors. Serebryanskiy argued that no text based on the original *Life* has survived, but it is better reflected in the Second Edition. According to him, the origins of the *Life* are to be found in a secular military tale, which was later modified by the clergy and gained wider popularity as the hagiographic *Life* that we know today. In Serebryanskiy's opinion, this orally transmitted tale of the courageous Prince Aleksandr influenced the content of both the First and the Second editions.⁶

The major difference between the First and the Second editions lies in the latter's secular emphasis on Aleksandr's virtues. The allegories are based not on biblical figures, such as Solomon, Joseph or Samson, but on Achilles, Alexander of Macedonia and the Byzantine Digenes Akrites. However, as it was written as a hagiography, Serebryanskiy concluded that the Second Edition was the work of a cleric, who was trying to combine the two versions of Aleksandr's *Life*, the non-extant earthly one with the hagiographic one. In Serebryanskiy's view, the First Edition had already been produced

² Mansikka 1913, 103–7.

³ Serebryanskiy 1915, 202.

⁴ Begunov 1959, 234–7.

⁵ See Okhotnikova 1987, 357–8.

⁶ Serebryanskiy 1915, 200–3.

by combining two sources, being an oral military legend embellished with hagiographic patterns, and he saw in the Second Edition an attempt to do so once again, only this time with fewer hagiographic amplifications. While the First Edition was more successful in combining the non-extant earthly war story with the hagiographic patterns, the Second Edition, as Serebryanskiy saw it, revealed better the features of the original, non-extant earthly biography of Aleksandr which was based on an orally transmitted military legend.⁷

Although Serebryanskiy concluded that the Second Edition of the *Life* was written as a hagiography, it actually lacks all the formulaic expressions of such a work. In fact, even its title says nothing of the 'life' of Aleksandr, as expressed in the First Edition's 'Story of the life and courage of the pious and Orthodox Prince Aleksandr', but is dominated by the 'death' of Aleksandr:

The death of the Great Prince Aleksandr of Novgorod, on November 14th, the feast-day of the Holy Apostle Philip. God bless him!⁸

The question of the origin of the legend of Aleksandr Yaroslavich is a mystery to which we may never achieve a definitive answer. In its glorification of an exalted prince, the *Life* raised the literature of medieval Russia to a level of mixed religious feeling and mystique about an invincible martial leader that none of its genres had achieved before. While noting Aleksandr's image as a universal war hero with biblical allegories, we also have to acknowledge his image as a military leader and army commander, as it might have been seen by a common soldier.

The Second Edition is far more compact and more straightforward in its storytelling than the First, because it was structured according to only a few of the main themes presented in the First Edition. It is very coherent and strong in its austere description, aiming to create a simple but easily distinguishable image of a great prince, who very dutifully made efforts on behalf of his people, and followed the honourable path of his noble forefathers. With its compact narration it succeeds in shortening many of the key events of the First Edition and leaves out others completely, e.g. the journey of Andreash, Khan's Baty invitation to Aleksandr, and the meeting with the pope's envoys. The battle descriptions are shortened so that

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 11.

only the rough outlines of events are presented, without mentioning any heavenly interference, miracles or visions.

The peculiarity of the Second Edition lies in its down-to-earth, dry style of recounting the story of Aleksandr's war exploits. In accordance with its solid war descriptions, no biblical allegories or miracles are alluded to, and all the metaphors applied to Aleksandr's virtues are completely secular. The story begins:

This is a story of the wisdom and courage of our great prince, the namesake of Alexander of Macedonia, who was like Achilles the Strong and Brave, a story of the Great Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich. God gave him life and glory, and his name was known everywhere, from the Sea of the Varyags to the Pontic Sea, all the way to the land of Tiver, both sides of the Gavats mountains and even in Rome itself. Armies spread the fame of his name to multitudes of people, to thousands upon thousands, and his awesome name echoed in front of the troops of warriors. Aleksandr was a prince of princes and a leader of leaders, and his voice was like a trumpet resounding far away. He won everywhere and was never defeated, and like Akrites, he was a fortress in front of other fortresses, for it was he who won all the campaigns, and was never forced to flee.⁹

The military tone of this edition is more sober than the First Edition, which constructed the image of an ideal ruler using hagiographic patterns, references to the Bible and the apocryphal literature, orations and prayers. In particular, the Second Edition emphasises Aleksandr's character as a military leader. It refers to his popularity among his troops, and shows how soldiers and armies, supposedly his own and those of the enemy alike, spread the fame of his awesome name through all the known world. The introductory passage explicitly underlines Aleksandr's valour as a leader in war, comparing him with the first fortification to face the enemy. Serebryanskiy's arguments about an earthly war legend as the basis for the Second Edition is understandable in this context, but it is still not based on any textual evidence. Although the Second Edition represents a eulogy to a well-liked and respected military leader, admired by his loyal comrades-in-arms, one cannot presume that its context lay in the military legends in any more straightforward a manner than that of the embellished, hagiographic First Edition. Equally, one could regard the Second Edition as a simplified and shortened version of the embellished First Edition.

⁹ Ibid.

After the warlike introduction of a mighty military leader, the Second Edition goes on to recount Aleksandr's exploits on the field of battle. The story of the battle of the Neva is short, and the details which led to the confrontation between the king of the Roman country and Aleksandr, as well as the actual details of the war itself, are kept to a minimum:

In those days Aleksandr alone confronted many peoples, the *Nemtsy*, the Lithuanians and the *Chud*. When the king of the Roman country heard of his bravery, he armed himself heavily and took many ships with him. He was filled with the spirit of war and arrived at the Neva, boasting that he would beat Aleksandr and conquer the great city of Novgorod, taking the Slavic people with him into captivity. As Aleksandr heard of this, he kneeled before the altar and prayed to the Holy Sophia with tears in his eyes, remembering the good deeds of his parents. Archbishop Spiridon of Novgorod gave him his blessing and sent him peacefully out from Novgorod. In the fury of his manliness Aleksandr did not wait for his troops, but took with him only his younger *druzhina*, and defeated the king and wounded him in the face with his spear. The enemy escaped shamefully, carrying many dead bodies to their ships, buried them at sea, and fled the same night.¹⁰

There is nothing that explicitly indicates that this story could have been written in Novgorod. The most important detail used to support such an origin is the title of the Second Edition, in which Aleksandr is mentioned as the great prince of Novgorod.¹¹ Novgorod was essential as a historical scene, as the ground where Aleksandr's military actions took place. Considering Serebryanskiy's hypothesis of an orally transmitted military legend, it seems that many of the warriors who might have had legends to remember from his battles must have come from Novgorod. The extremely short battle description of the Second Edition, however, does not make any references to Aleksandr's men as coming from Novgorod, as it merely states that Aleksandr rushed to the River Neva with only his personal retinue. Furthermore, although the hagiographic embellishment has been stripped away from the narration, it still leaves a very formal style. As personal eyewitness accounts are lacking, the story could just as well have come from the pen of a skilled writer.

There were several military expeditions in which troops from Suzdal were explicitly mentioned as being among Aleksandr's forces,

¹⁰ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 11–12.

¹¹ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 11.

such as the battle on Lake Peypus in 1242 and the foray directed at the lands of the Tavastians in 1256, which are reported in the Second Edition as well as in the *Novgorod I* and *Laurentian* chronicles.¹² Aleksandr must have had his personal retinue in every battle described in the *Life*. Of the six brave men who were particularly mentioned as distinguishing themselves in the battle of the Neva in the First Edition, two—Sbyslav Yakunovich and Misha—were mentioned as being from Novgorod, and one, called Yakov, was from Polotsk; the origins of the other three were not mentioned. Only one of the six brave men—Savva—was particularly mentioned as belonging to Aleksandr's younger *druzhina*.¹³

The short description in the Second Edition is not interested in presenting the bravery of any of the soldiers in the battle of the Neva, and describes Aleksandr's symbolic act of wounding the king in the face as the only single event that took place there. It is notable that none of the information on the Neva battle which could be considered local, such as the number of casualties among the men of Novgorod, as presented in the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, has any place in the Second Edition.

The description of the battle on Lake Peypus follows the same lines as the Neva story, its details being shortened to a minimum. Not only is the question of heavenly assistance from God's angels omitted, but Aleksandr's speeches to his men are cut out and the participation of Andrey and his men from Suzdal is not mentioned. Similarly, no account is given of the *Nemtsy* killed or taken prisoner. The glorious procession which entered the city of Pskov with hymns and exaltation, and the words that Aleksandr addressed to the people of Pskov are absent too. Clearly the Second Edition is a formal, hierarchical apotheosis of a great prince, although it lacks most of the usual hagiographic embellishments, ceremonial processions and speeches:

Aleksandr brought comfort and help, but after he went to the land of Suzdal, the *Nemtsy* gathered together and came to Pskov, which was subjugated to Novgorod, and they defeated the troops of Pskov and installed their own officials there. Aleksandr heard of this, and was very sad about the shedding of Christian blood. He gathered his troops

¹² *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 12–13; *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 81; *Laurent'evskaya letopis'*, 203.

¹³ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 189–90.

without delay, and showed jealousy over the Holy Sophia and the Holy Trinity. He took his men with him and arrived in Novgorod, and kneeled in front of the Holy Wisdom, praying and crying. He took troops from Novgorod with him and went to Pskov. On his arrival he dismissed the *Nemtsy* officials, and made obeisance to the Holy Trinity. He went to their land with a desire to revenge the Christian blood that had been shed. When the master heard of this, he went against them together with their bishops, with a multitude of their men of foreign language, and with the officials they had in their country, with the help of the queen. And they came down to a lake called the Lake of the *Chud*. Aleksandr, strengthened by the power of the cross, engaged them in battle and defeated them, slaying some, drowning others in the water, and taking some of them alive in his hands, while others escaped wounded. And so he arrived in Novgorod in great triumph. After this he went to the land of the *Yam* [Tavastians], bypassing the insurmountable mountains, and made war in Pomor'e, after which he returned to his land with the multitude of prisoners. And his land was famous, as all men feared his might (*groza*) and bravery.¹⁴

The Second Edition of the *Life* describes altogether three military campaigns undertaken by Aleksandr, not only the battle of the Neva and the battle on Lake Peypus, but also a raid on the land of Tavastia (*na strany Yam'skuya*) which took place in 1256, which is not mentioned in the First Edition. The Second Edition describes how during this expedition Aleksandr bypassed the insurmountable mountains, conquered the whole coastline, and returned home with a great number of hostages. The expedition is also reported in both the *Novgorod I* and *Laurentian* chronicles.¹⁵ Since Aleksandr was already a great prince of Vladimir at the time of the Tavastian campaign in 1256, he also had forces from Suzdal with him: 'That winter Prince Aleksandr left against the Tavastians with the men of Suzdal and Novgorod, beat the Tavastians, and brought with him many captives.'¹⁶ The *Novgorod I Chronicle* also gives a full version of the events on the Gulf of Finland, recounting how Aleksandr first confronted the combined Swedish, Finnish and Tavastian forces at Narva and, after beating them, went to Tavastia, where he and his troops encoun-

¹⁴ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 12–13. The expression 'Aleksandr . . . showed jealousy over the Holy Sophia and the Holy Trinity' demonstrates how concrete and earthbound a relationship medieval people had with their familiar saints. Aleksandr was furious because the Germans had captured Pskov and were now taking care of the most important shrines, particularly the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity.

¹⁵ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 81; *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 203.

¹⁶ *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 203.

tered the 'hard road', for they could not distinguish day from night. Eventually the expedition was successful, and after destroying the land of the Tavastians, all the men of Novgorod arrived home healthy and with a good booty.¹⁷

For what reason did the writer of the Second Edition include the Tavastian expedition in Aleksandr's exploits? Was it added in order to compensate for the description in the First Edition of the successful foray to Lithuania, as the author also left several minor incidents with the Lithuanians unmentioned? According to the First Edition of the *Life*, it was after the Lithuanian expedition that Aleksandr's fame spread to every country.¹⁸ Similarly, it was after the Tavastian expedition that the author of the Second Edition praised the fame of his name.¹⁹

The favourable attitude of the Second Edition towards the Lithuanians has a logical explanation which derives from the historical background of its origins. Okhotnikova used the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr as her cornerstone when dating the *Life of Dovmont*. Dovmont was a popular prince of Pskov, whose Lithuanian name Daumantas later turned into its Russian form, Dovmont. The *Life of Dovmont* depicted his raid on Estonia in 1268 and the defence of Pskov against an attack by the Teutonic Knights, according to the model contained in the Second Edition of Aleksandr's *Life*, but not in the First, which led Okhotnikova to conclude that the primary model for the *Life of Dovmont* was the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr. Using Aleksandr's expedition against the Tavastians as its model, Dovmont was depicted fighting against the Estonians, contending with impassable terrain, conquering the lands of the *Chud* as far as the sea, devastating the land of Pomor'e, and returning with large numbers of prisoners.²⁰ This all happened during the Rakovor expedition of 1268, and the familiar *topos* of the awesome fame of the fierce warriors was once again in evidence after Dovmont's successful Estonian expedition, being attached in this case to the whole army of Pskov:

¹⁷ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 81.

¹⁸ *Povesti o zhitiï*, 191–192.

¹⁹ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 13.

²⁰ *Skazanie o Dovmonte*, according to the manuscript from the Pogodin collection, No 1413, 52. According to Okhotnikova this manuscript is close to the *Pskov III Chronicle* accounts of the *Life of Dovmont*, which she claimed to be (together with the *Life of Dovmont* in the *Pskov I Chronicle*) of earlier origin than the *Life* included in the *Pskov II Chronicle*. Okhotnikova 1985, 35–55.

And our land was praised in every country, and all were terrified of the courage of Dmitriy Aleksandrovich and his brother-in-law Dovmont, and the bravery of their men from Novgorod and Pskov.²¹

In studying the origins of the *Life of Dovmont*, Okhotnikova also presented her argument regarding the existence of this model, first rejecting Begunov's and Grabmüller's arguments that the earliest version of the *Life of Dovmont* was to be found in the *Pskov II Chronicle*, and instead claiming that the *Life* as contained in the *Pskov I Chronicle* was the earliest.²²

Since Begunov considered the Second Edition to have been written in the 15th century, this affected his dating of the *Life of Dovmont*, whereas Okhotnikova tended to follow the ideas of Grabmüller, who considered the *Life of Dovmont* to have been part of the non-extant Pskov chronicle edition of 1368. The literary style of the *Life of Dovmont* was identical to that of the yearly chronicle accounts for 1323–48, which made her date Dovmont's *Life* to that period. This fitted in perfectly with her concepts of the political atmosphere in Pskov and the growing demands for independence from Novgorod, and she regarded the elevation of the cult of Prince Dovmont as a glorious example of the independent spirit to be found in Pskov.²³

It is Prince Dovmont and the military legend that arose from his glorious reputation which links the *Life* of Aleksandr Yaroslavich to the Lithuanian hero. The *Life of Dovmont* grew to a large extent from the basis of the *Life* of Aleksandr, and is a comparable story of a heroic prince defending his lands against western intruders. However, as prince of Pskov, Dovmont himself led many sorties against the Lithuanians. He participated in a conspiracy that led to the assassination of his relative, the Lithuanian King Mindaugas, after which he escaped the revenge of the latter's son by fleeing with his *druzhina* and household to Pskov, where he was elected prince and thereafter defended the land successfully against the Lithuanians and the Teutonic Knights.²⁴

²¹ *Skazanie o Dovmonte*, 52.

²² The *Life of Dovmont* in the *Pskov II Chronicle* is dated by Okhotnikova to the end of the 15th century. Okhotnikova 1985, 29–35.

²³ Okhotnikova 1985, 48–66. See also Okhotnikova 1987, 358; Okhotnikova, *Povest' o Dovmonte* 1989, 239–41.

²⁴ The *Galician Princely Chronicle* gives a colourful description of Dovmont's actions during the assassination of Mindaugas, as it contains many more details of Lithuanian politics. *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 359.

Lithuania's role in the balance of power between the Orthodox Russian principalities, the Catholic West and the Muslim Golden Horde of the steppes was of enormous importance. At the beginning of the 14th century, Europe was a patchwork of new ecclesiastical and princely polities struggling to assert their will in a general power vacuum. The reasons for the many possibilities in choosing allies were grounded in this highly complex situation: Russia had been invaded by the Mongols; Constantinople was menaced not only by the Mongols and Turks, but also by the Venetians and Genoese; the pope was confronted with demands from the German emperor and, finally, the schism between the eastern and western Christian Churches led to a continuing search for ways to achieve the Church's lost unity. Located on the frontiers of so many warring states, Lithuania could quite freely choose its allies and pick at its enemies.²⁵

One of the most prominent Lithuanian diplomats was King Mindaugas who, during his long reign (1238–63), used almost all the means that one could think of, committing murders, arranging dynastic marriages and even converting to Catholicism, to assert his political power. His career was brought to an end by one of the methods he had used in his own brutal administration, political murder, committed in 1263 by a group of Lithuanian noblemen. The *Galician Princely Chronicle* describes these events and depicts the duke of Nalshia, Daumantas, as one of the chief assassins, acting on behalf of Mindaugas's ambitious nephew Treniota/Traidenis.²⁶ Although Dovmont/Daumantas and his clan escaped to Pskov, he remained in close contact with Traidenis, who acceded to the throne of Lithuania after a civil war in 1270–82. Traidenis was at war with the Teutonic Knights, and had trading relations with Russian merchants.²⁷

Pskov was an important city on the border of the area controlled by the German merchants and the Teutonic Order, and as it was under the influence of independent Lithuanian princes, who were brilliant in the skills of medieval diplomacy, it provided many opportunities for the princes of Tver to form alliances against the hegemony of the growing principality of Moscow. During the reign of Khan Uzbek (1312–42), the Golden Horde was at the height of its power, while the Russian principalities were in a state of disunity

²⁵ Rowell 1997 (1994), 24.

²⁶ *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 359; see Rowell 1997 (1994), 51.

²⁷ Rowell 1997 (1994), 51–84.

and mutual rivalry. After the death of Andrey Aleksandrovich (1304), the princes of Moscow and Tver, the descendants of Aleksandr Nevskiy and his brother Yaroslav respectively, were competing for the throne of the great prince. Mikhail Yaroslavich of Tver held the traditional right of succession by male seniority within the Rurikid clan, but his cousin Yuriy Danilovich of Moscow challenged him for the throne. Mikhail's greatest failure was, perhaps, that he never succeeded in allying himself with the metropolitan during his years as grand prince from 1304–18.

In 1320 Mikhail's son, Dmitriy, married Maria, daughter of the Lithuanian grand duke Gediminas (1315–41), which showed that Tver was aiming at an alliance against Moscow. The alliance between Lithuania and Tver against Moscow dominated Russian political life until well into the 15th century. Pskov, for its part, was ruled by another son of Mikhail's, Aleksandr Mikhailovich, to whom Gediminas gave his support. Gediminas also supported the promotion of the cult of the city's first Lithuanian prince, St Dovmont, who was given the Orthodox name Timofey upon his baptism.²⁸ Indeed, the victories that the armies of Pskov achieved with the help of St Dovmont's prayers, as recorded in the Pskovian chronicles of 1323, 1341 and 1407, all coincide with the presence of a Lithuanian prince in Pskov.²⁹ The Pskov chronicles depict how the city had to face the *Nemtsy* threat alone in 1323, after Novgorod and Prince Yuriy refused to give any help, leaving only Lithuanian auxiliaries.³⁰ In the 1341 battle description, the chronicler remarks that 'the men of Pskov realised that they did not have any help from other principalities and they put their trust in the Great Holy Trinity and the prayers of Vsevolod and Timofey'.³¹

Saintly princes defending their city probably had nowhere such strong cultic status as in Pskov. Military cults had had an unparalleled significance in the town's history ever since the days of its ear-

²⁸ Rowell 1997 (1994), 19, 177.

²⁹ The *Pskov II Chronicle* reports for the year 1323 that victory was achieved over the *Nemtsy* 'with the help of the Holy Trinity, and because of the prayers of the Orthodox Princes Gavriil and Timofey'. *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 2, 23. Help received through the prayers of Vsevolod and Timofey is also mentioned in the *Pskov I* and *Pskov III* chronicles, which note that the armies of Pskov were also victorious because of the prayers of these saintly princes in 1341 and 1407. *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 11, 16, 19, 29; *Pskovskaya tret'ya letopis'*, 89, 96, 113. See Rowell 1997 (1994), 178.

³⁰ *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 23.

³¹ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 19; *Pskovskaya tret'ya letopis'*, 96.

liest warrior saint, Prince Vsevolod Mstislavich, also known by his baptismal name of Gavriil. He was expelled from Novgorod in 1136, but was invited to Pskov soon afterwards. His career was a short one, for he died in Pskov in 1138, after a reign of only one year. Vsevolod-Gavriil can hardly be distinguished as a great warrior, especially as the reason for his expulsion from Novgorod was his crushing failure as a military leader, most notably the humiliating defeat which Novgorod suffered against Suzdal under his leadership. The *Pskov II Chronicle* gives a brief account of the unsuccessful Novgorod-Suzdal war of the year 6643 (1135): 'Prince Vsevolod Mstislavich went with the men of Novgorod to Suzdal, and they were vanquished as they tried to escape. Thus they went back to their homes defeated.'³²

The indignant citizens of Novgorod put their defeated prince under arrest and finally expelled him from the city. Although Prince Vsevolod also eagerly involved himself in the power struggle in Kiev, the *Pskov II Chronicle* gives the shameful failure in the battle against Suzdal as the only reason for the irritation of the Novgorod citizenry. Since peace was maintained in Pskov during his one-year reign, Vsevolod actually waged no wars against his western neighbours, the *Nemtsy*, the Lithuanians or the *Chud*. Prince Vsevolod, who at first glance looks much like an anti-hero on the battlefield, was to become a military hero and patron of Pskov after his death. The details of the birth and upbringing of the first military saint of Pskov, Prince Vsevolod-Gavriil, are highly controversial, since the sources leave the historical details in obscurity. Most scholars regard the cult as a very early one. Golubinskiy, for example, argued that it was established either soon after his death, for his relics were transferred to the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in 1192, or at the latest soon after 1284, when the first miracle was reported to have taken place at his grave.³³ Since his first hagiographic *Life* was written only in sixteenth-century Moscow, when it was attached to the *Book of Degrees*, there is, however, no proof for the dates of the reported miracles. The *Life* in the *Book of Degrees* reports the miracles as having taken place very soon after the prince's death.³⁴ The chronicles of Pskov do not

³² *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 19.

³³ Golubinskiy, 1903, 61.

³⁴ See the *Life of Vsevolod-Gavriil* in the *Book of Degrees*. *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL 21:1, 193–202. The short narrative devoted to the pious Prince Vsevolod-Gavriil in the *Pskov II Chronicle* does not include any miracles. See *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 19.

reveal much about his life, or about his cult for that matter. No glorious battle descriptions proclaimed his fame as a warrior hero. On the other hand, the *Pskov II Chronicle* regards Vsevolod as no ordinary prince, but a ruler who was commemorated in the chronicle by an account under a title of its own for the year 6646 (1138).³⁵

Since the first half of the 14th century seems to be the active period of the development of military cults in Pskov, it is essential to ask, what exactly was the position of Aleksandr Mikhailovich (prince of Tver from 1325–39) in Pskov? He was a favourite of Gediminas, and a namesake of his grandfather's brother Aleksandr Nevskiy. Yuriy of Moscow became great prince (1318–22) after Mikhail of Tver had been executed in the Golden Horde. Mikhail's oldest son Dmitriy, who had married a Lithuanian princess, opposed Yuriy's pretensions at first, but was forced to give up his claims to seniority. Eventually Dmitriy murdered Yuriy in the court of the khan in 1325, and was himself punished by the khan with execution. After his death, Aleksandr Mikhailovich became head of the Tver clan, while his opposite number in Moscow was Ivan Kalita, younger brother of Yuriy Daniilovich. At first Aleksandr Mikhailovich won the favour of the khan, but in 1327 Ivan directed a punitive expedition against Tver, for which he had the khan's full support.³⁶ Aleksandr was then forced to flee into exile in Pskov. From there he fought valiantly to regain his lost throne, and after years of effort, he finally succeeded in winning the khan's *yarlyk* (patent) to rule his native Tver in 1338. But only a year later, in 1339, he was abruptly summoned to the Horde and executed.³⁷

If Okhotnikova's dating of the origins of the *Life of Dovmont* to the first half of the 14th century is correct, it means that it was written precisely during the times of fierce dispute over hegemony between Tver and Moscow, when Pskov offered asylum to the refugee princes of Tver. Did the *Life of Dovmont* back up the pro-Lithuanian alliance in which Tver played an important part when fighting with Moscow for hegemony over the other Russian principalities? The *Life of Dovmont*

³⁵ *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 19; cf. shorter untitled accounts in the Pskov I and III chronicles. *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 10; *Pskovskaya tret'ya letopis'*, 76.

³⁶ The story of the popular uprising against the Mongols in Tver in 1327 and the subsequent Mongol raid, *Povest' o Shevkale*, found its way into a number of Russian chronicles. The earliest accounts are in the *Novgorod I*, *Simeonov* and *Tver* chronicles. See Fennell 1967, 161–79; Danilevskiy 2000, 257–61.

³⁷ See Crummey 1987, 38–9.

itself did not take sides in the feuds among the Russian principalities, but concentrated on describing the martial undertakings of the Orthodox prince against the Teutonic Knights.

The *Life of Dovmont* first recounts how this Lithuanian prince came to Pskov and left his ancestral pagan religion, allowing himself to be converted to Christianity. It then devotes a lengthy passage to the raids carried out by Dovmont with his valiant men from Pskov. After Dovmont participated in the battle of Rakovor in 1268,³⁸ he is said to have conducted a separate raid of his own on the Estonians and to have conquered the whole coast of Pomor'e, according to the model of the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr. After that a raid of retribution on the 'pagan Latins' is described, and great emphasis is given to a valiant battle at the River Miropovna, which runs into Lake Peypus. Then, according to the model of the battle of the Neva in the First Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr, the master of the Teutonic Order hears about the bravery of Dovmont and equips a large army and many ships for an assault on the land of Pskov, and the confrontation between the Teutonic Knights and the valiant men of Pskov is once again vividly depicted. Two more battles against the pagan Latins are presented after this, at which point Dovmont is praised and assigned the Prophet Isaiah's characteristics of an ideal ruler. Dovmont's glorious fame is said to have spread all over the world, and his piety is likened to that of Hezekiah, on account of whom Jerusalem was rescued. Finally there is a short note on Dovmont's death and the grief of the citizenry of Pskov.³⁹

The campaign of Dmitriy Aleksandrovich against Yur'ev links the *Life* of Aleksandr with the Russo-Lithuanian relationship and with Dovmont of Pskov. In the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* the Russian attack on Yur'ev in the autumn of 1262 is connected to an infringement by the Lithuanian king Mindaugas of his peace with the Teutonic Order and his abandoning of the Christian faith which he had accepted earlier:

At this time it happened that Mindaugas broke the peace. The Master was a wise man, he acted in a brave manner and guarded the land. Whatever roads he knew that went there from the Lett lands, he ordered to be watched. As soon as this had been done, the Russian army appeared. It wanted to enter the country at Darpet.⁴⁰

³⁸ The battle of Rakovor took place on 18 February 1268.

³⁹ *Skazanie o Dovmonte*, 50–7.

⁴⁰ *Die Livländische Reimchronik*, verses 6599–6609.

The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* gives the impression of Russo-Lithuanian cooperation after Mindaugas had broken the peace with the Teutonic Knights. Nothing is said of Lithuanian allies in Aleksandr's *Life*, for during his reign as prince of Novgorod Lithuania had been the most dangerous and constant threat to the eastern borders of the Russian principalities. The principality of Polotsk had been in the greatest danger, and by allying himself with the prince of Polotsk, by marrying his daughter Aleksandra, Aleksandr Yaroslavich had made considerable efforts to keep the Lithuanians away from there. After the Mongol conquest, Polotsk was soon lost to the Lithuanians, but Aleksandr's fortifications and efforts kept them from the lands of Novgorod and Pskov.⁴¹

An important dynastic link is said to have been made between the Lithuanian Dovmont and the ideal warrior hero Aleksandr, accomplished through Dovmont's marriage with Dmitriy Aleksandrovich's daughter. The sources do not reveal when and to whom Dmitriy Aleksandrovich himself was married, but there is a mention in the *Tver Chronicle* of a son called Ioan who was born to Prince Dmitriy in 1290. Two years later the chronicle reports that Dmitriy's son Ioan was married.⁴² This could obviously not be anything more than an official engagement of Dmitriy's two-year-old boy, but it does give us evidence of the procedure followed in princely marriages, which were frequently arranged with infant heirs. Dovmont's proposal to the daughter of Dmitriy can thus be regarded merely as a proposal of future marriage, which perhaps allowed Dmitriy to be titled as father-in-law to the doubtless much older Dovmont, who already had a Lithuanian wife whose beauty was (according to the *Hypatian Chronicle*) eventually the cause of Mindaugas's assassination.⁴³ The pagan princes of Lithuania left very few literary sources behind,

⁴¹ Fennell, 1983, 102–4.

⁴² *Tverskoy sbornik*, 406.

⁴³ The *Galician Princely Chronicle* gives us a very exciting story of Prince Dovmont's participation in the murder of Mindaugas, according to which events started from the death of Mindaugas's wife, which caused him great pain and grief. As the deceased wife had a sister who was married to Dovmont, prince of Nalshia, Mindaugas lured her to come to his court in order to pay respect to her deceased sister. This was just a clever plot to kidnap the beautiful sister, however, as Mindaugas had no intention of returning her to her real husband. When Dovmont heard of this, he was very upset, and started to plot Mindaugas's assassination, together with Treniota/Traidenis, another relative of Mindaugas. In 1263 Mindaugas undertook a great military expedition, in which Dovmont was also involved, and during the campaign Dovmont killed Mindaugas and two of his sons. See the *Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis'*, 359.

since they were heathen and therefore not bound to the demands of literary sources and Christian historical writing, and so the true relationship between Dovmont and Dmitriy remains in obscurity.

The only chronicle which reports the marriage of Dmitriy's daughter to Dovmont is the *Pskov II Chronicle*, where no information is actually provided regarding the wedding itself, but it is simply stated that Dovmont asked Dmitriy for the hand of his daughter, Princess Marya. This is reported to have happened soon after Dovmont had come to Pskov, immediately after his first great victory over the rival Lithuanian princes beside the River Dvina and a couple of years before his participation in the Rakovor expedition, which took place in 1268. The information in the *Life of Dovmont* as contained in the *Pskov II Chronicle* is in itself dubious, as after the description of the battle between the men of Pskov and the Lithuanians at the River Dvina, the writer had at first written, 'After that the Orthodox Prince Dovmont asked for the hand of Anna, daughter of the Great Prince Dmitriy Aleksandrovich'. The name 'Anna' was later crossed out, and the name 'Marya' written in the margin.⁴⁴

The date of the proposal means that Dmitriy was hardly more than 13 years old, and even if he had had a daughter then, she could not have been more than a baby. S. C. Rowell argues that Dovmont married Marya before 1282, the year when he rescued Dmitriy's treasures when the great prince himself fled 'beyond the sea' to Sweden, to escape the machinations of his brother Andrey.⁴⁵ Rowell's argument is based solely on his error in reading the *Pskov II Chronicle* account, however, from which he understood incorrectly that Dovmont married Marya as a consequence of the battle of Rakovor.

Thus it has to be concluded that the real dynastic link between the Aleksandrovichi and Dovmont cannot be verified for certain, since the information on the possible weddings of some of the daughters of Dmitriy Aleksandrovich is very obscure. However, it is obvious that later political propaganda established Dovmont's position as a son-in-law of Dmitriy, which made him a family relation to Aleksandr Nevskiy. Not only was he thus paralleled to the ideal warrior image of Aleksandr, but apparently in this way Prince Dovmont also became more Russian. It seems very likely that the *Life of Dovmont* and the

⁴⁴ *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 17.

⁴⁵ Rowell 1992, 16.

Second Edition of Aleksandr's *Life* developed at the same time, during the same period, when Lithuanian influence was strong in Pskov. Had the author of the Second Edition some reason for leaving Lithuania as a minor antagonist and preferring to remain silent about Aleksandr's campaigns against them, and if so, why? Could the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr reflect the alliance of Tver and Lithuania in their mutual fight against Moscow and the Golden Horde? In order to answer the questions raised by this first part of the Second Edition, the examination must turn to the last part of the narrative, and the new images it offered for the presentation of Aleksandr Yaroslavich as an ideal prince.

2.2. *The self-sacrificial image of the Second Edition of the Life of Aleksandr*

If the First Edition of the *Life* already had a bipartite structure, this dual composition was even clearer in the succinct, cohesive narrative of the Second Edition. Its last part was dedicated to the image of a perfect ruler, as reiterated in the First Edition. The obligatory values of a meritorious prince were once again repeated: Aleksandr's charity towards the Church and the poor; his hospitality, and his sense of justice. Attached to the image of an ideal ruler—his charity shown to his people and his consolation for them in their despair—is Aleksandr's reconstruction of burned houses and ruined churches after their destruction by Nevruy. The short, compact narrative of the Second Edition excludes the whole episode of the eastern Tsar Baty and his admiring words to Aleksandr. No reasons for Nevruy's campaign are given, as Aleksandr's younger brother Andrey is not mentioned at all. The analogy between Aleksandr and Hezekiah was not present in the Neva description, but the Second Edition of the *Life* gave a parallel in the devoutness of a good ruler:

Solely because of the pious Hezekiah Jerusalem was saved from the captivity of Sennacherib, king of Assyria.⁴⁶

The *Life of Dovmont* also established a parallel between Dovmont and Hezekiah using the formula from the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr. In the *Life of Dovmont* the praise of a pious ruler whose

⁴⁶ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 13.

humble faith rescued his people was attached to all three warriors, to 'our princes' Aleksandr, his son Dmitriy, and Dovmont, whose fame was repeated in every country, like the fame of 'a certain Akrites'.⁴⁷ The Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr presented an image of him as one whose devoutness to God was equal to that of Hezekiah, which ultimately saved his country:

Likewise Aleksandr, after the destruction of Nevruy, reconstructed churches and towns, and people who had escaped returned to their homes. The Prophet David put it well when he said that, 'Fathers are followed by their sons.' After the first great Tatar conquest, his father Yaroslav had given new life to the land of Suzdal, cleaning up the carcasses and bones of the dead from the churches, consoling the people who had returned, and gathering people to their homes once more. When the pagans violently enslaved the Christians, the Great Prince Yaroslav did not save himself, but sacrificed himself before his people by going to that vast, dark, and baleful land. He suffered much on behalf of his patrimony, for he was wrongly accused by Feodor Yaronovich, and after suffering for many days, he died. Likewise, his son Aleksandr did not abandon the path of his father.⁴⁸

Thus a totally different image to that of the First Edition is shown in the final paragraphs of the Second Edition, where an openly hostile and deprecatory tone is adopted towards the violent, devastating Mongol occupation. Prince Yaroslav's death in the Horde was quietly silenced in the chronicles of north-east Russia, and only the *Galician Princely Chronicle* among contemporary writings openly revealed the reason for Yaroslav's sickness on his way home from the Horde, as discussed earlier in this study.

In the narrative of the Second Edition, the Mongols are finally accused of causing the death of Prince Yaroslav, and their country is depicted as calamitous and disastrous for good Christians, who suffer greatly from their brutal violence. Even though not said openly, the suggestion of Yaroslav's murder is clear, for the phrase in the Second Edition 'for he was wrongly accused by Fedor Yaronovich' refers to intrigue in the Horde, plotting among fellow Russians, which led to Yaroslav's assassination by the khan. The identity of this Feodor Yaronovich has remained in obscurity, as the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr does not explain who he was, and his involvement in Yaroslav's poisoning is seldom mentioned among historians. The

⁴⁷ See *Skazanie o Dovmonte*, 56.

⁴⁸ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 13.

nineteenth-century historian S. M. Solov'ev mentioned briefly the possibility of feudal intrigue among the Russians, and the denigration of Prince Yaroslav made by Feodor Yakunovich (not Yaronovich, as stated in the Second Edition) in the Horde as possible reasons for Yaroslav's fate at the Mongol court.⁴⁹

By stating that Aleksandr followed the path of his father, the author of the Second Edition was evidently raising the sacrificial and suffering image of Yaroslav Vsevolodovich to the centre of the narrative, as it was in his footsteps that his son eventually followed. The comparison between father and son was made through their reconstruction of the devastated Suzdal, as they both rebuilt the ruined city of Vladimir after Mongol raids. But most importantly, their most glorious virtue was that of self-sacrifice, demonstrated by their fatal journeys to the disastrous land of the pagan Mongols. Aleksandr's shadowy death was thus enfolded in the context of a political murder, as his final journey to the Golden Horde was likened to the last journey of his father. Thus his sacrificial position as a follower of his father's destiny was well established:

Because those foreigners took many people into slavery, Aleksandr went to them, awakening great admiration. Without sparing himself, he gave them all his property and wealth. Also, he did not spare his heart on behalf of the Christians, for he released them from the foreigners and guarded them from destruction, disaster and captivity. He had been sent on the journey by former Christian prisoners, and that same year, when he was returning home and approaching Nizhniy Novgorod, his health became worse, so that when he reached Gorodtse, he fell ill. After suffering greatly, he left the earthly world and became a monk of the Schema. And thus he gave up his soul in peace on November 14th, the day when the holy apostle Philip is remembered.⁵⁰

After this new image of Aleksandr as a sufferer and a sacrificial ruler, the rest of the narration in the Second Edition consists only of a short description of his funeral, where the words of Metropolitan Kirill about the setting of the sun over Suzdal are repeated, without any miracles included.⁵¹ With its sober, compact narrative, the Second Edition of the *Life* paints a strikingly different picture of Prince Aleksandr to the First Edition. As its narrator shortened the

⁴⁹ See Solov'ev 1895, vol. 3, chp. 3.

⁵⁰ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 13–14.

⁵¹ *Spisok vtoroy redaktsii*, 14.

story, he selected carefully the parts which were to be left in. Thus Aleksandr's dealings with the Mongol khan in the Golden Horde are presented in a totally different light to those with the distant, diplomatic figure of 'a certain powerful tsar in the eastern Land', as mentioned in the First Edition. By contrast, the Second Edition makes no attempt to provide a close-up of the Mongol rulers, but describes them as generally disastrous and ruinous for the Russian lands and their good rulers.

Contemporary reports condemned the onslaught of the nomad conquerors, as the reports of the Mongol attack of 1237–8 in the chronicles testify. Some sources showed open criticism and contempt towards the habits and beliefs of the Mongols, who cherished the old pagan traditions of their forefathers. Their pagan customs were emphasised particularly strongly in the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov*, another princely life, which presented Prince Mikhail as a martyr who died for the Christian religion, refusing to submit to pagan Mongol customs in the Horde. Mikhail of Chernigov was one of the most important figures in the medieval Russian princely descriptions, and his *Life*, with a heading 'The Story of the Murder of Prince Mikhail of Chernigov and his *boyarin* Feodor in the Horde' (*Skazanie ob ubienii v Orde knyazya Mikhaila Chernigovskogo i ego boyarina Feodora*) was extremely popular among the lives of princely saints of the period of the Mongol conquest. Prince Mikhail of Chernigov had to submit to Mongol domination and, like all the other Russian princes, he had to pay a visit to the Horde to obtain the right to rule (*yarlyk*) in his native Chernigov. On 20 October 1246, however, Mikhail and his *boyarin* Feodor were killed in the Horde on the orders of Baty. Whatever the real reason for this murder may have been, the *Life* explains that Mikhail was killed because he refused to take part in the pagan rites which Russian princes were forced to perform while visiting the Mongol khan.⁵²

A visit to the Horde proved fatal for many Russian princes during the long Mongol rule, but none of the princes who died in this way were commemorated in the manner of Mikhail of Chernigov. No doubt the popularity of his memory was due to the veneration inspired by his daughter Marya, the widowed princess of Rostov, who commissioned the tale of his death to be written soon afterwards

⁵² *Skazanie ob ubienii v Orde knyazya Mikhaila Chernigovskogo i ego boyarina Feodora*, 228–34.

and had a church erected in Rostov in memory of Mikhail and Feodor.⁵³ The earliest *Skazanie*, a short version of the *Life* was included in the *Prolog* of Rostov, a collection of hagiographic readings that has survived from the end of the 13th century. Mikhail's *Life* was expanded a century later, however, and the famous Serbian monk Pakhomi Logofet wrote an expanded version of it in the middle of the 15th century. It was also included in Metropolitan Makariy's *Great Menology* a century later. The *Life* enjoyed enormous popularity and was often included in the fifteenth-century chronicles.⁵⁴

The *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov* was interpolated into the chronicles alongside that of Aleksandr Nevskiy, interwoven into the crucial events of Russian history. Evidently both their images were able to express the official vision of history, articulating the attitude towards the Mongol conquest. Although Prince Mikhail died in the Horde because he would not submit to the will of the khan, while Aleksandr Nevskiy gained greater merit and praise because of his good influence on the khan, the fate of Aleksandr Yaroslavich's image was to be mingled with the self-sacrificial image of Mikhail in the annals of history.

It was in the pages of the fifteenth-century chronicles that the popular stories of Mikhail and Aleksandr were presented side by side, so that they came in time to be the two ideal princes of the period of the Mongol conquest, each in his own way. The *Life* of Mikhail and the *Life* of Aleksandr were first adopted into the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* and into the *Sophia I Chronicle*. Passages from the *Life* of Aleksandr were inserted to the year 1240, when the long passage on the battle of the Neva was introduced. Mikhail's *Life* was added to a passage a few years later, in 1245/6.⁵⁵ The younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* apparently interpolated the *Life* of Aleksandr and the *Life* of Mikhail into its edition of 1424, during the term of office of Archbishop Feodosiy Klopskiy. The *Sophia I Chronicle* had a peculiar narration of its own of the *Life* of Aleksandr, which combined the narratives of both the First and Second editions and greatly emphasised Aleksandr's likeness to his father—a feature that was to meet with some response in later chron-

⁵³ Milyutenko, 1996, 195–6.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', mladshii izvod*, 289–94; *Sofyyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 176–90.

icles such as the *Simeonov* and *Nikon* chronicles, and also in Makariy's *Book of Degrees*, to which this idea was remarkably well suited, as will be shown later in this study.

As Mikhail of Chernigov's death in the Horde gave birth to a hagiographic life, which presented the Russian prince as a martyr who shed his blood for his Christian faith, another tendency to depict voluntary submission was developing. It was at the beginning of the 14th century that a literary style showing critical tones against the Mongols arose in Tver, as reported magnificently in the tale of the death of Mikhail of Tver in the Horde. This anti-Horde programme was a political one, and it was also connected to the rivalry between Tver and Moscow. The literary theme of a 'new Job', the image of an ideal prince who was willing to sacrifice himself to save others' lives, emerged particularly in Tver,⁵⁶ a theme that takes us on to a third great example of this ideal attached to rulers, the accounts of the martyred Prince Mikhail Yaroslavich of Tver, who died in the Horde as a result of political intrigue organised by the prince of Moscow, Yuriy Daniilovich, in 1318. The circumstances in the Horde and Mikhail's execution are reported in the *Tale of the Death of the Great Prince of Tver Mikhail Yaroslavich in the Horde* (*Povest' ob ubienii velikogo knyazya tverskogo Mikhaila Yaroslavicha v Orde*), which has survived in a few editions, the oldest being that included in the *Sophia I Chronicle*.⁵⁷ Unlike the death of Mikhail of Chernigov, Mikhail Yaroslavich's death was not caused by his Orthodox religion, but by political plotting, and for that reason it comes closest to the self-sacrificing image of Aleksandr Yaroslavich as given in the Second Edition of his *Life*.

The princes of Tver were descendants of Yaroslav Yaroslavich, brother of Aleksandr Nevskiy. Tverian influence was very strong in the Vladimir and Moscow chronicles, because of Tver's flourishing chronicle writing tradition at the beginning of the 14th century, when the princes of Tver received the *yarlyk* to rule as great princes. The style of princely chronicle writing that was established in Tver in those years also had a wide influence on the Novgorod chronicles.⁵⁸

The Tverian chronicle has survived only as inserts and somewhat edited interpolations in the chronicles of north-east Russia. Allegedly,

⁵⁶ Danilevskiy 2000, 252–3, 268.

⁵⁷ Danilevskiy 2000, 245.

⁵⁸ Murav'eva 1983, 42–59.

most of the information in the *Laurentian Chronicle* for the time after the death of Aleksandr until the death of his sons came from the Tverian chronicle.⁵⁹ The chronicle edition of 1305, which the monk Lavrentiy used as a basis for his chronicle, originated from Tver, although possibly in a shortened copy. Much later the *Simeonov Chronicle* included wider and fuller accounts based on material from Tver, which suggests a common source for both of them.⁶⁰ According to Priselkov and Murav'eva, chronicle writing started in Tver during the reign of Mikhail Yaroslavich, in the 1290s, when the princes of Tver began to take an active part in the internal contest for political power in Russia. When Mikhail received the *yarlyk* for the office of great prince, the local Tver accounts were intermingled with princely chronicle writing. According to Murav'eva, the first princely chronicle edition to originate from Tver was completed in 1327.⁶¹

The image of Aleksandr becomes a matter of great interest in the light of the substantial influence of chronicle writing in Tver very soon after Aleksandr's death. Fennell argued that one of the main reasons for the writing of the *Life* of Aleksandr was to re-establish his image in an age when the princes of Tver—descendants of Yaroslav Yaroslavich—were beginning to assert that their rights to the throne of Vladimir were equal to those claimed by the sons of Aleksandr. He argued that Yaroslav Yaroslavich did little to encourage the chroniclers to maintain the glorious picture of his older brother Aleksandr. Fennell assumed that much of Aleksandr's princely chronicle was deleted during Yaroslav's reign, which would explain the extraordinary poverty of chronicle entries concerning Aleksandr, and the almost complete absence of panegyrics in the *Laurentian Chronicle*. According to Fennell, the *Life* of Aleksandr might have been created in an attempt to restore his image during this period of Tver hegemony in chronicle writing.⁶²

Fennell's theory is not, however, very convincing. Firstly, it seems that the Tverian chronicles did pay respect to the *Life* of Aleksandr,

⁵⁹ See Murav'eva 1983, 42.

⁶⁰ Murav'eva 1983, 59. There are many chronicles which make use of the local Tverian accounts for the years between 1282 and 1327, including the *Rogozhskiy* and *Nikon* chronicles, the *Tverskoy sbornik* and the *Sbornik Muzeinogo sobraniya*. The *Trinity*, *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles also had accounts originating from Tver. Murav'eva 1983, 84–92.

⁶¹ Murav'eva 1983, 101–2.

⁶² Fennell & Stokes 1974, 116.

and at the same time they also incorporated the *Life*. The Tverian chronicle collection (*Tverskoy sbornik*) is a chronicle manuscript written in 1534. The compiler was allegedly of Rostov origin, and used the Tverian chronicle, which contained yearly accounts up to the last years of the 15th century. According to Lur'e, the part up to 1285 was copied from certain Rostov and *Novgorod I* chronicles, and the part from that date onwards was from a Tverian source.⁶³ The *Tverskoy sbornik* gave the heroic Prince Aleksandr full treatment, by incorporating his hagiography. Interpolations from the *Life* were taken for a period extending from the year of the battle of the Neva, 1240, to the coming of the pope's envoys to Novgorod in 1252. In contrast, the only reference to the founder of the ruling dynasty of Tver, Prince Yaroslav Yaroslavich, is a brief mention in 1253:

That winter Prince Yaroslav Yaroslavich fled from the Lowerlands, leaving Tver, his patrimony, and arrived in Pskov to occupy its princely throne.⁶⁴

If the Yur'ev campaign passage in the *Life* was supposed to be significant in defining its leader as either Dmitriy or Yaroslav, it is clear that the Tverians, who eagerly elevated their princes, were not interested in Yaroslav Yaroslavich's role in the expedition. On the contrary, his role is quite unimpressive. It is only his descendants whose memory becomes important and is cherished. The necrology of Yaroslav's son, Mikhail Yaroslavich, commemorates a prince who was given a full martyr's crown in the Tverian chronicle collection, with a lengthy passage describing his unjust torment in the Horde in 1318, so that he is remembered as 'The blessed Christ-loving Great Prince Mikhail Yaroslavich, grandson of Great Prince Yaroslav Vsevolodovich'.⁶⁵ Obviously, since Yaroslav Yaroslavich was not a great prince, he was not worth mentioning in the nomenclature of his son.

His famous uncle Aleksandr Yaroslavich, whose heroic exploits against the Swedes and the *Nemtsy* were the subject of hagiographic interpolations in the chronicle, was also left without a proper necrology. The information on the last events in his life was reduced to the minimum in a single sentence for the year 1263: 'That year

⁶³ Lur'e, *Letopis' Tverskaya* 1989, 61–3.

⁶⁴ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 398.

⁶⁵ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 413.

Great Prince Aleksandr, son of Yaroslav and grandson of Vsevolod, died on November 14th.⁶⁶ Thus there is no information on Aleksandr's last journey to the Horde, and no mention of Dmitriy's campaign in Yur'ev. In addition, Aleksandr's descendants on the throne of Vladimir, first his brothers and then his two sons, are treated in an equally neutral and reserved manner, so that only obligatory information on the main stages in the family struggles is given, with very short, laconic notes on their deaths.⁶⁷

The ultimate hero of the Tverian chronicle collection is Mikhail Yaroslavich, the first great prince to come from the city of Tver, the initiator of the tradition of great princes there and of the principality's eminence. Mikhail Yaroslavich is by far the most beloved characters in the whole Tverian collection, remembered not only in the first part, which extends to 1402, but also as a hero in the final part, *Predislovie letopistsa*, the recapitulation of the most important early events in the history of Tver, the history of the Tverian great princes, which continues the chronicle up to the end of the 15th century.⁶⁸

Once Mikhail of Tver has risen as the central figure in the politics of north-east Russia, the chronicle treats the events in more detail. The most emotional episodes are naturally the martyrs' deaths of its princes in the Horde, and the laments and necrologies. Mikhail Yaroslavich (1271–1318) was prince of Tver from 1285, and received his *yarlyk* as great prince of Vladimir in 1305, on the death of Andrey Aleksandrovich. He participated eagerly in the struggle for power with the princes of Moscow. In 1317 Khan Uzbek decided to back up the claims of Yuriy Danilovich, giving him the throne of Vladimir and sending a Mongol army to help him. Although Mikhail was at first successful in this war, a fateful accident happened which turned the tide against him. During the confrontation between Yuriy and Mikhail, Yuriy's wife, Konchaka, a sister of the khan, was taken prisoner and died in captivity. Eventually Mikhail was summoned to the Horde and executed.

The *Tale* of Mikhail Yaroslavich's death in the Horde as given in the Tverian chronicle collection presented the literary theme of a sacrificial prince, one of the key virtues of a popular ruler in the eulogies of the era. Although the *Tale* states that the Mongol occu-

⁶⁶ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 403.

⁶⁷ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 403–7.

⁶⁸ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 465–504.

pation took place because of God's will, as a punishment for the sins of the people, its tone reflects deep resentment towards the pagan conquerors. The version given in the *Sophia I Chronicle* depicts Mikhail as fully aware beforehand of the dangers he would face if he went to meet the khan in the Horde. He obtained a blessing from his spiritual confessor (*dukhovnyy otets*), as Mikhail of Chernigov and Aleksandr Yaroslavich had done before him, and was willing to shed his blood, knowing that if he did not go to the Horde, the khan would send a punitive expedition to ravage his lands and cause misery to his people. When Mikhail's son Konstantin tried to stop his father from putting himself in danger and offered to go to the Horde himself, Mikhail answered him:

Don't you see, my child, that the tsar doesn't want you, he doesn't want anyone else's head but mine. If I stay hiding here, then my patrimony and I myself will be taken, and many Christians will be killed. If I am going to be killed after such a plundering anyhow, then it is better to give my life straight away in order to save so many other lives.⁶⁹

The Tverian collection gives Mikhail full treatment as the innocent victim of a malevolent calumny by a sinister ally of Yuriy, 'the cursed Kavgadyy', a Mongol official and Khan Uzbek's chief representative, with whom Yuriy of Moscow had returned from the Horde in 1317. After Mikhail had shown his superior strength on the battlefield, Yuriy of Moscow and Mikhail of Tver were to settle their quarrel over the throne in the Horde with Khan Uzbek. In the early spring of 1318, before going to the Horde, Yuriy consulted Kavgadyy in Moscow on how best to conduct himself at the khan's court. Acting on his advice, he set off to the Horde accompanied by Kavgadyy himself and an impressive embassy of boyars from Moscow and Novgorod. Yuriy's purpose was to lay before the khan evidence of Mikhail's misgovernment and misappropriation of tributes. Meanwhile, Mikhail made little haste to depart for the Horde, and sent his son Konstantin ahead of him. He was to pay dearly for his delay, for according to sources in Tver, Kavgadyy and Yuriy had already begun to lay their accusations before Khan Uzbek.⁷⁰ According to the Tverian chronicle collection, the khan ordered Mikhail to be executed because of the treacherous lies perpetrated by Kavgadyy. The

⁶⁹ *Sofyiskaya pervaya letopis'*, 208–15.

⁷⁰ See Fennell 1968, 81–6.

chronicle treats Mikhail as a martyr, a voluntary sufferer who gave his life on behalf of others and thereby subordinated himself to God's commands, as the chronicler solemnly puts it.⁷¹

His execution on 22 November in 1318 is described simply, with an impressive absence of heroics, in a style reminiscent of the *Primary Chronicle's* version of the murder of Boris and Gleb:

Early on Wednesday the blessed Mikhail rose and told the priest to begin Matins and the Hours, and he listened with many tears and bitter sighing. He bade him begin the office of the Holy Communion, and he himself sang from the books and prayed with emotion. . . . One of his servants jumped into his tent and said: 'O master, Kavgady and Yuriy are coming from the Horde to your tent.' The blessed one, seeing them coming, said: 'They are coming to kill me.' And he quickly sent off his son to the khan's wife. Now Kavgady and Yuriy dismounted from their horses at the market-place, near his tent. The murderers burst into his tent like wild beasts and merciless drinkers of blood. He stood there in perplexity; they seized him by the yoke, struck him heavily and hurled him against the tent so that his side broke. But he got up again. Then many seized him and threw him on the ground and kicked him with their feet. Finally one of the lawless murderers, by name Romanets, took out his great sword and struck the blessed one in the heart, on the right side, and twisting the blade around cut his holy heart. And so he gave up his spirit to the hands of God. The Blessed and Christ-loving Great Prince Mikhail Yaroslavich confronted the death required for Christians and for his land (*ochina*) on November 22nd, on the sixth hour of the day, and Prince Yuriy sent the honourable and pious body of the blessed Mikhail to Russia, where it was taken to Moscow and deposited in the Church of the Holy Saviour.⁷²

The description of Mikhail's funeral procession includes an account of the funeral lamentations for the deceased and a necrology, which was not given in the Tverian chronicle collection when describing the deaths of any previous great princes of Vladimir, not even Aleksandr Yaroslavich, although the chronicle borrowed from his *Life* when describing his military exploits. Thus we find Mikhail's son, Aleksandr Mikhailovich, making peace with Yuriy in Moscow and bringing the body of his deceased father from Moscow to his native Tver. The reception of the 'holy corpse' is described as involving the whole citizenry of the town, together with all the clergy and the

⁷¹ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 413.

⁷² *Tverskoy sbornik*, 411–12.

princely family, to accompany it to the church for burial. A very rhetorical account is given of the whole city being shaken by great lamentations and grief.⁷³

Mikhail's virtues were the traditional ones of the princely necrologies, fully comparable to those of his predecessors as princes of Vladimir, as described in the *Laurentian Chronicle*. Mikhail was tall and awesome in stature, he was feared in battle, always showing great ability and manliness, and his fame was known in distant countries. He was also humble and showed respect for the Church and its clergy. The chronicler notes that he listened to the Holy Scriptures day and night. He avoided drunkenness, and always respected the will of his mother, the honourable Oksinya. At the end his anxiousness for martyrdom is highlighted by describing his respect for martyrs and his willingness to share the same bitter cup as them.⁷⁴ The great princes of Tver are true heroes and leaders who demonstrate the ideal image of a self-sacrificing prince. The story of Mikhail Yaroslavich—his faith while in the Horde and his glorification in death at the hands of Prince Yuriy's evil men, the description of his funeral and, above all, his skilfully presented eulogy—projects an image that is much deeper than the strictly secular martial hero represented by Aleksandr Nevskiy in the *Tverskoy sbornik*.

The other late source, the *Simeonov Chronicle*, which reflects the 1412 edition of the Tverian chronicle, nevertheless shows some development in the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy. Like the *Tverskoy sbornik*, it gives a very positive image of Aleksandr's younger brother, Andrey Yaroslavich, who confronted the anger of Nevruy. The *Simeonov Chronicle* also described in its short necrology how Prince Aleksandr showed great courage in battle and fought against the pagan Tatars on behalf of the Christians in the year of his death.⁷⁵

Thus an obviously new feature was little by little emerging in the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy. When the most important image of a martyr prince was shown in the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov*, an Orthodox prince who died for his Christian religion, the ideal of the self-sacrificial prince underwent further development. Most probably it was under Tverian literary influence that Aleksandr came to be depicted as a sufferer who sacrificed himself not for his religion, but

⁷³ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 412–13.

⁷⁴ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 413.

⁷⁵ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 72.

for his people. The ideal of political sacrifice was fully adopted into the image of Aleksandr Yaroslavich, as the ideals of the fourteenth-century martyr princes, originating in Tver, came to be reflected in his image in the Second Edition of the *Life*, which highlighted the sufferings of Aleksandr and his father in the Golden Horde. From the 15th century onwards, Aleksandr's image adopted more and more characteristics pointing to voluntary submission to a martyr's death at the hands of the godless enemy, which was particularly neatly represented in the Second Edition. Ultimately this new feature in Aleksandr's image also changed the image of the Mongols.

2.3. *The adoption of the sacrificial image of Aleksandr into the chronicles*

When this new feature in Aleksandr Nevskiy's image appeared in the Second Edition, in all likelihood as early as the 14th century, it gave greater scope to chroniclers in presenting their image of Aleksandr Yaroslavich. In using the wider source material, the chroniclers selected the key features of the ideal prince which best fitted their interests. The problems of the origins of the chronicles, their editions, writers, copiers, relationships, sources etc., can be considered as one of the most difficult tasks of medieval Russian history. It is a field that has aroused a lively interest and widespread speculations and suppositions regarding the writers and alleged sources of the manuscripts that have survived to the present day. From the time of Shakhmatov, the tracking and dating of *letopisnye svody*, existing and non-existing chronicle editions, has been at the centre of studies of Russian medieval sources.

One of the great interests in this arena has been the chronicle writing of Novgorod. As the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was being adopted during the 15th century into the pages of the Novgorod chronicles, and was included in two of the most important fifteenth-century chronicles, namely the *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles, it is impossible to avoid discussing their hypothetical mutual sources. The *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles are thought to reflect a common origin, a chronicle edition written in the first half of the 15th century. This edition is non-extant, and various hypotheses exist regarding its date and origin. Shakhmatov concluded that the *Sophia I Chronicle* followed the same basic source as the *Novgorod IV Chronicle*

up to the year 1418, and argued that their common source was a chronicle edition of 1448.⁷⁶ The date of this hypothetical chronicle edition can naturally be argued in many ways; it has also been dated to the 1430s and referred to at times as the Novgorod-Sophia edition (*Novgorodsko-Sofiyskiy svod*), or a chronicle edition of the first half of the 15th century.⁷⁷

According to Lur'e, this hypothetical chronicle edition was compiled in the metropolitan's court and had a clearly aimed message, urging the Russian princes to unite in resistance against the enemy from the steppes.⁷⁸ Lur'e suggests that the chronicle was compiled during, or soon after, the years of crisis in the 1430s and 40s, when rivalry over the grand princely throne drew Vasilii II Vasil'evich of Moscow into a long series of internal wars. In the same period the office of metropolitan was several times left vacant. The metropolitan's court moved from city to city according to the needs of the office, which meant that the writing was done partly in Moscow and partly in Smolensk, Novgorod and Pskov. Vasilii was forced several times to seek help from the strong principality of Tver and its prince, Boris Aleksandrovich, which in Lur'e's hypothesis explains the great influence of the Tverian princely descriptions on the chronicle.⁷⁹ In Lur'e's opinion, this chronicle edition was instrumental in creating the idea of unity; it urgently called upon the 'brother' princes to unite the Russian lands while—significantly—still preserving the autonomy of the independent principalities.⁸⁰

It is generally thought that the *Sophia I Chronicle* followed this hypothetical chronicle edition more accurately, because many of the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* passages seem to be either shortened or left out entirely when compared with it. For example, the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov* is not found in the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* at all.⁸¹ The treatment of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was also very different in these

⁷⁶ The year 1448 was listed as a year when Easter and the Annunciation fell on the same day in the reference to the tale of the battle of Kulikovo which was found in both the *Novgorod IV* and the *Sophia I* chronicles. Shakhmatov concluded that this year must have already been at hand when the reference was written, and therefore concluded that the mutual source could not have been written earlier than 1448. See Lur'e 1976, 108–9.

⁷⁷ Gippius 1997; see Bobrov 2001, 63–4.

⁷⁸ Lur'e 1976, 104–6. See also his article in English, Luria 1994, 52.

⁷⁹ Lur'e 1976, 114.

⁸⁰ Luria 1994, 52.

⁸¹ Lur'e, *Letopis' Sofiyskaya I* 1989, 57–60.

chronicles. As observed earlier, in its description of Aleksandr Nevskiy, the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* used several sources, including local military legends, and formed a less saintly image of the prince.

The *Sophia I Chronicle* has been considered to have origins in both Novgorod and Moscow. Bobrov treated the *Sophia I Chronicle* as a chronicle originating from Moscow in his sketch of the relationship between the Moscow and Novgorod chronicle editions. According to him, it derived from the 1418 chronicle edition of Metropolitan Fotiy.⁸² The *Sophia I Chronicle* served as the basic source for the chronicle tradition of the great princes of Moscow, and has survived in several manuscripts. It is divided into younger and older editions. The first edition, written during the 1440s–60s, is extant in two manuscripts, Obolenskiy and Karamzinskiy. Both contain the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, divided among the yearly accounts for 1240–51.⁸³

The *Sophia I Chronicle* is organised with occasional headings, an important feature that the Russian chronicles came to use more and more. This development culminated in the sixteenth-century *Book of Degrees*, which was organised under headings denoting the ruling great princes. Headings are used in the *Sophia I Chronicle* only on important occasions. The events at the Neva, under the heading ‘About the Great Prince Aleksandr’,⁸⁴ mark the beginning of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, which was incorporated to the year 1240. The beginning of the hagiographic part of the account declares:

This is a story about our Great Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich, a wise, humble, intelligent and brave namesake of Alexander of Macedonia, who was the equal of Tsar Achilles in his strength and bravery.⁸⁵

This is exactly the same as the beginning of the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr which we studied earlier. After this introduction, the chronicle returns to the patterns of the First Edition: ‘In the name of our Lord, I, poor, sinful and feeble-minded, will write about the life of the great and saintly Aleksandr Yaroslavich . . .’⁸⁶ The hagiographic insertions follow the First Edition of the *Life*, except for one integral feature taken from the Second Edition, namely the emphasis on the role of Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, Aleksandr’s father:

⁸² See Bobrov 2001, 165.

⁸³ Lur’e, *Letopis’ Sofiyskaya I* 1989, 57–8; cf. *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis’*, 176–87.

⁸⁴ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis’*, 176.

⁸⁵ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis’*, 176.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

After the first invasion by Khan Baty, the Great Prince Yaroslav Vsevolodovich cleaned the bodies of the deceased from the churches and collected their bones together, comforted many and brought the people who had escaped back together. Also, when the pagans pressed on the shoulders of the Christians, this great prince had no pity for himself, but went to the Horde, to the great and deceitful land of the Tatars, and had to suffer immensely on behalf of the Russian land.⁸⁷

Thus the chronicle passage for 1246 follows the Second Edition in referring to Aleksandr's father, who was killed in the Horde. It follows:

That autumn, on 30th September, Great Prince Yaroslav Vsevolodovich encountered unavoidable death in the Horde. Just as the Holy Scriptures tell us of the deeds of people who give their lives for others, so this great prince gave his life for all the people of Russia.⁸⁸

As the Second Edition of the *Life* was partly interpolated into the pages of the *Sophia I Chronicle*, a new interpretation of the historical role of Aleksandr Nevskiy and his father was manifested in its pages. The sentimental note of Yaroslav's death leads on to the role of his son, Aleksandr:

His son Aleksandr did not abandon the path his father had taken, but he also went to the Horde on behalf of his people who were suffering as prisoners of the godless Tatars. And he paid much gold and silver for the prisoners, to free them from distress and imprisonment at the hands of those godless Tatars.⁸⁹

The passages from the Second Edition of Aleksandr's *Life* deliver an important ideological message of the father and son following the same path in the service of their people, which they were obliged to do as great princes. The core of this image is the role of the great prince as a servant of his subjects, in which the Christian ideal of humility is combined with the aristocratic ideal of honour. As Boris and Gleb were of major significance as the first Russian saints through their voluntary submission to the political murders committed by their older brother, Aleksandr and his father were clearly following this ideal of self-sacrifice, and in their voluntary suffering they also imitated Christ. As Fedotov noted, the act of non-resistance was one of the most specific features of Russian religious

⁸⁷ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 186.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

ideals,⁹⁰ and, as shown in the previous section, this was especially highlighted in the princely descriptions of Tver.

It is no wonder, therefore, that there was also room for the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov* in the pages of the *Sophia I Chronicle*. Baty's invasion left many victims, one of the most important princely ones being Mikhail, whose *Life* is presented under the year 6753 (1245). Mikhail was devoted to his religion, whereas Aleksandr and Yaroslav made their sacrifices not for religion, but rather through their obligation to their people. In the case of Aleksandr's sacrificial image, the emphasis is on the godless Mongols, even though Aleksandr's heroic deeds were directed towards the *Nemtsy*. The image was radically changed after the *Sophia I Chronicle* had been filled out with passages from the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr. From then on, the focus was more and more on his moral duty, which he accomplished for the well-being of his Russian subjects, something that the earlier *Novgorod I Chronicle* had already stressed in connection with the description of his funeral, but which was steadily and rapidly developed in the *Sophia I Chronicle* around his sacrificial death in the Horde.

After this addition of the ideal of the self-sacrificial prince to the image of Aleksandr from the Second Edition of the *Life*, the chronicle turns to the neutral description of the Mongols in the First Edition when describing the occasion when a certain forceful tsar from the eastern lands sent his messenger to Aleksandr and invited him to pay him a visit. Typically, since this passage faithfully repeats the conventions of the First Edition, the *topos* of the great king is used, even though the preceding passage has just informed the reader about the cruelty of Baty's invasion and the distress of the Russian people caused by the godless Tatars.⁹¹ The encounter with the admiring Khan Baty was, after all, an important narrative device, because it was one of the key examples which enabled an idea to be conveyed of Aleksandr's fame and his admirable physical appearance.

As the ideal of suffering and sacrifice was established, it is not surprising that the character of Andrey Yaroslavich—who at this time offered resistance to the Mongol overlordship—also gained more room in the chronicle. The scene of Nevry's destruction has also preserved the features of the First Edition, although the background

⁹⁰ Fedotov 1966, vol. I, 94–109.

⁹¹ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 186.

to the events and Andrey's fate is presented more thoroughly. Like the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, the *Sophia I Chronicle* also argues that Andrey was killed during his stay in Sweden—a mistake which makes Andrey Yaroslavich die twice in the chronicle. Andrey is a fascinating figure in the *Life* of Aleksandr. He appears to be the strong arm fighting by the side of his elder brother against the *Nemtsy* in 1242, but he also appears as a rival in the account of the khan granting him the position of great prince of Vladimir in 1249, which is something that the First Edition of the *Life* is silent about. Some historians have looked upon him as the head of the anti-Mongol coalition, which also included his brother Yaroslav of Tver and his father-in-law Daniil of Galicia. His defeat at the hands of the Mongols in 1252 has been seen as a result of the pro-Mongol politics of his elder brother Aleksandr who, during Nevruy's raid and Andrey's expulsion, was negotiating in the Horde, and who was nominated as great prince of Vladimir by the khan after Andrey's escape.

The historical sources for the contemporary events are extremely limited, and Andrey's fate was outlined in the First Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr in the briefest terms:

Later, Khan Baty became angry with Aleksandr's younger brother, Andrey, and sent his general, Nevruy, to sack the land of Suzdal. After Nevruy's invasion, Grand Prince Aleksandr rebuilt the churches and cities that had been destroyed and gathered the people who had run away back to their houses.⁹²

What did the contemporary chroniclers know of the tragic events that overshadowed the relationship between Aleksandr and Andrey? John Fennell, in his in-depth survey of the sources telling of power relationships in Suzdal after the death of their father, Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, paid source-critical attention to the chronicle information about Prince Andrey's battles against the Mongols in 1252.⁹³ From the sparse chronicle information we can sketch the main lines of what took place as follows: after Yaroslav's death in 1247, his brother Svyatoslav occupied the throne of Vladimir, and presumably Andrey superseded his uncle in 1249. In 1252 Aleksandr Nevskiy, who appears to have spent most of his time in Novgorod, set off for the Horde, where he contacted Khan Sartak. Perhaps as a result of

⁹² *Povesti o zhiti*i, 192.

⁹³ Fennell 1973, 49–63.

this mission, a Mongol expedition under the leadership of Nevruy was sent north against Andrey and his brother Yaroslav of Tver. Andrey and Yaroslav were decisively defeated at Pereyasavl Zalesskiy. Resistance against the Mongols was suffocated, Andrey was forced to flee to Sweden, and Yaroslav's family was arrested and his wife murdered. After these events Aleksandr received the patent to the throne of Vladimir.

The Novgorod and Pskov chronicles do not pay any attention to the raids that took place in Suzdal, the only contemporary chronicle to report the events being the *Laurentian Chronicle*, which described the happenings of the year 1252 as follows:

In the year 6760 [1252] the prince of Novgorod, Aleksandr Yaroslavich, went to the Tatars, where he was received with great honour and was given superiority over his brothers. In that year Andrey Yaroslavich decided to escape, so that he did not have to serve the khan (*tsar*). He escaped to an unknown land together with his princess and *boyary* and the Tatars chased after him to the city of Pereyasavl, but God and the prayers of his father saved him. The Tatars devastated the land, and they took the princess and the children of Yaroslav, and they killed the army commander Zhidoslav and the princess, and they sent the children of Yaroslav into captivity. They took with them many people, horses and cattle, and caused much misery as they left. In the same year the Tatars released Oleg, Prince of Ryazan, to return to his own land, and Great Prince Aleksandr arrived from the Tatars to the city of Vladimir, where he was received with crucifixes at the Golden Gates by the metropolitan, all the *igumeni*, and the people of the city. They placed him upon the throne of his father Yaroslav . . . and there was great joy in the city of Vladimir and in the whole land of Suzdal. In the same year the Christ-loving Prince Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich died.⁹⁴

Fennell divided this entry in the *Laurentian Chronicle* into four parts in terms of content, since in his opinion they formed together a very heterogeneous and incoherent entry. First he noted that the beginning of the entry describing Aleksandr's successful trip to the Horde was favourable in tone towards Aleksandr, whereas the next entries relating the escape of Andrey and the destruction of Pereyasavl were favourable to Andrey. The latter part of the entry, describing Aleksandr's arrival in Vladimir, was once again favourable to Aleksandr.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ *Lawrent'evskaya letopis'*, 202.

⁹⁵ Fennell 1973, 52–3.

Fennell also noted that the middle section describing Andrey's flight and the Mongol raid came from two different sources, since the description of the Mongol raid does not logically follow the events which describe Andrey escaping, which occur before the idea of the arrival of the Mongols is even mentioned. He thus concluded that the entries came from the personal chronicles of the three brothers, those of Andrey, Yaroslav and Aleksandr, respectively. Fennell concluded that the *Laurentian Chronicle* entry for 1252 was, like so many of its entries for the 13th century, a composite one, consisting of an episode from Aleksandr Nevskiy's chronicle with two interpolations inserted into it, the first a highly abridged reference to Andrey's flight, and the second an extract from the earliest chronicle of Tver describing the results of the battle of Pereyasavl.⁹⁶

By contrast with the complex entry in the *Laurentian Chronicle*, Fennell found the entry in the *Sophia I Chronicle* striking in its homogeneity, as it had none of the patchwork elements of the *Laurentian* account. In its tone it is entirely sympathetic to Andrey, who is rightly named as a great prince throughout. The accurate description of the Mongol movements prior to the battle and the precise itinerary of Andrey's flight led Fennell to conclude that this entry could only have been written by a contemporary, perhaps a member of Andrey's entourage who accompanied him on his flight to Sweden. Fennell concluded that the entry in the *Sophia I Chronicle* must have formed a part of Andrey's own chronicle.⁹⁷

Here the study is faced with the tremendous complexity of the process of chronicle writing. According to Fennell's sketch, each time the throne of Vladimir changed hands in the 13th century, the chronicle changed hands too. Chronicle writing in Vladimir and Suzdal from the 1230s to the 1270s clearly reflects changes made by scribes devoted to the lives of the princes Konstantin, Yuriy, Yaroslav and Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich and by those linked to the next generation of princes—Andrey, Aleksandr and Yaroslav Yaroslavich.⁹⁸ The problem of how and why the fragments from these 'private chronicles' survived the constant re-editing, which may have taken place each time the throne changed hands, is nevertheless a puzzle that is hard—if not impossible—to resolve.

⁹⁶ Fennell 1973, 54.

⁹⁷ Fennell 1973, 55.

⁹⁸ Fennell 1973, 56.

The description of Andrey's flight to Sweden in the *Sophia I Chronicle* was erroneous in one point, however, and that was the description of Andrey's death. All the fifteenth-century Novgorod chronicles, the younger version of *Novgorod I*, the *Novgorod IV* and *Sophia I* chronicles give the information that Andrey was killed while in exile in Sweden, and the *Novgorod IV Chronicle* even states that it was the *Chudi* who killed him.⁹⁹ This was not the case, however, since Andrey appears once again in the pages of the chronicles from the year 1257 onwards, taking part in politics together with his brother Aleksandr and the other princes of north-east Russia. In 1257 Andrey visited the Golden Horde together with his brother Aleksandr and Boris Vasilkovich of Rostov,¹⁰⁰ and he died in 1264.¹⁰¹ Apparently after returning from his exile in Sweden, he was reconciled with Aleksandr, returned to his patrimony of Gorodets and Nizhniy Novgorod, and was later given Suzdal as well.¹⁰²

The ill fate of Andrey was continued with the hagiographic conventions of the *Life* of Aleksandr, which explained Aleksandr's good deeds after the destruction wrought by Nevruy, for it was then that Aleksandr accomplished the actions which made him the ideal prince. It was through this act of reconstruction that the ideal image of a ruler according to the prophets David and Isaiah was attained. This was also obligatory because of the comparison between father and son, Yaroslav and Aleksandr, both of whom had to be described as rulers who built up new hope for people under pressure.¹⁰³

The *Sophia I Chronicle* also dutifully repeats the passage about the emissaries from the pope. The arrival of Galda and Gemont is described, and Aleksandr's answer to them is repeated in the dry tones of the First Edition.¹⁰⁴ Then a sequence of local occurrences that lie outside the *Life* is described, representing events in Novgorod and Pskov, and then, briefly, Aleksandr's death, without any influence from the *Life*. Here the preceding events in the Horde are revealed by noting that Khan Berke did not let Aleksandr travel back home until after he had become sick. Aleksandr's journey back to Russia

⁹⁹ *Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis'*, 38; cf. *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *mladshii izvod*, 304; *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 186–7.

¹⁰⁰ *Lawrent'evskaya letopis'*, 203.

¹⁰¹ *Tverskoy sbornik*, 403.

¹⁰² See Fennell 1973, 51.

¹⁰³ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 186–187.

¹⁰⁴ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 187.

follows, with his death in Gorodtse on 14 November, followed by a short statement on his burial in Vladimir.¹⁰⁵

After this description comes the heading 'About the death of Great Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich, grandson of Great Prince Vsevolod', which recalls his death and burial according to his *Life* in the First Edition. Thus we have two descriptions of Aleksandr's death in the *Sophia I Chronicle*, the second following the hagiographic model, with a lament and the miracle that occurred at the burial. Particularly notable and in harmony with the tone of the whole story of Aleksandr as a Russian great prince are the words of Metropolitan Kirill, for here for the first time the famous sun allegory is presented in its new form: 'My dear children! Be aware, that the sun of the Russian lands has gone down.'¹⁰⁶

It is notable that, although the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* named Aleksandr as a Russian prince when referring to his journey to the Horde and his awesome fame, with regard to his efforts not only for Novgorod but for the whole land of Russia, Kirill still referred to him traditionally in his funeral speech as the sun of the land of Suzdal, in accordance with the First Edition of the *Life*.¹⁰⁷ The changes in Kirill's words that took place in the *Sophia I Chronicle* followed logically from this, and he was seen in the 15th century above all as a prince who not only served Novgorod, but did his duty with regard to all of his Russian subjects.

In accordance with this, the whole description ends after the miracle with the testament, with the solemn words:

And so God honoured His favourite one, who was much troubled on account of the Russian lands and of Novgorod and Pskov and who gave his life for his great principality and for the Orthodox faith.¹⁰⁸

Thus it can be concluded that the historical narrative of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the *Sophia I Chronicle* was reconstructed from three parts: firstly, from the local chronicle tradition of Novgorod; secondly, from the First Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr, and thirdly, from the Second Edition of the *Life*, from where the sacrificial ideal of his image was strengthened. Together with the *Life* inserted into the

¹⁰⁵ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 190.

¹⁰⁶ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 191.

¹⁰⁷ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *mladshii izvod*, 306.

¹⁰⁸ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 191.

younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle*, the *Sophia I Chronicle*, in its patchwork elements of the legendary sources concerning Aleksandr, witnessed an important development in his image.

In his analysis of the relationship between the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* and the *Sophia I Chronicle*, Begunov noted that they include two different variants of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*. Begunov called them the first and second types of the Second Edition.¹⁰⁹ His naming of these adaptations of the *Life* as representing the same edition is totally without justification when considering that their content is totally different. While the younger version of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* adapted the First Edition, expanding it with local chronicle accounts, the *Sophia I Chronicle* used much broader material in its narrative.

Begunov also suggested that the emergence of the *Life* into the chronicles was connected with the activities of Archbishop Evfemiy II (1429–58), who was allegedly eager to elevate Novgorod's past and to promote new cults to back up its independent identity.¹¹⁰ Archbishop Evfemiy II is considered a representative of the *boyar* class of Novgorod, a bitter enemy of Moscow who advocated a conservative policy of maintaining Novgorod's independence. He was even prepared to conclude an alliance with Lithuania in order to oppose attempts at centralisation in Moscow. It is usually said that he launched many new cults which underlined Novgorod's independence, but this idea should be accepted with some reservation, as Richard D. Bosley has pointed out.¹¹¹ The image of Aleksandr, with its message of sacrificial service for the benefit of the Russian people at large, certainly cannot be considered proof of a Novgorodian cult. Therefore, besides the deficient naming of the chronicle adaptations of the *Life*, Begunov also failed to give a motivation for their appearance in the chronicles.

The changing of Aleksandr's image in his *Life* and its effect on the chronicles has aroused surprisingly little comment, and the few statements have mainly concerned the dating of the sources. Mansikka dated the Second Edition to the 15th–16th centuries, because he thought that it was created as an independent *Life* only after the *Sophia I Chronicle* was written. He argued that whoever reworked it

¹⁰⁹ Begunov 1959, 236.

¹¹⁰ Begunov 1959, 236.

¹¹¹ Bosley 1984, 1–15.

used the *Sophia I Chronicle* as his basis when creating the Second Edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*.¹¹² This opinion has by now been largely abandoned, but the relationship between the texts is still in a state of confusion. Okhotnikova argues that the *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Sophia I Chronicle* reflects a specific all-Russian edition from the hypothetical all-Russian chronicle edition, which both the *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles were supposed to reflect.¹¹³ As pointed out above, there is no justification for her statement, for the treatment of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image in the above-mentioned chronicles is very different, and it is certain they did not use mutual sources in their treatment of his life and image.

The merged image of Aleksandr, with features from both the First and the Second editions of the *Life*, as done in the *Sophia I Chronicle*, was inevitable. This served the new emphasis on personal sacrifice which evolved as the hagiographic *Life* of Aleksandr, and particularly that of Mikhail of Chernigov, found their way into the pages of the chronicles. But the *Sophia I Chronicle* was not the only medieval source to witness this combination. It was also established in a single manuscript found by Mansikka in the library of N. P. Likhachev and published in his study *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo* in 1913. Since the book was already in print when the discovery was made, however, he did not have the opportunity to provide any commentary to the text, but only managed to attach the manuscript to his selection of the editions of the *Life* of Aleksandr.¹¹⁴ Okhotnikova calls the text the Likhachev edition (*Likhachevskaya redaktsiya*), and Begunov refers to the text as the third style of the Second Edition.¹¹⁵

Serebryanskiy argued that the *Life* presented in the Likhachev manuscript was reworked from the Second Edition, and that it had been augmented with information taken from the *Novgorod I Chronicle* in its younger version, in which passages from the First Edition had also been adopted. He did not believe that it was influenced by the *Sophia I Chronicle* version of the *Life*, as Mansikka had argued.¹¹⁶ As Okhotnikova notes, however, the true relationship between the

¹¹² Mansikka 1913, 103.

¹¹³ Okhotnikova 1987, 359.

¹¹⁴ See Mansikka 1913, 125–32.

¹¹⁵ Okhotnikova 1987, 358–9.

¹¹⁶ Serebryanskiy 1915, 202; Okhotnikova 1987, 359; Mansikka (1913) 1984, 124–5.

Likhachev's Edition of the *Life* and others is still open, although Mansikka's statement that the edition belongs to a group of chronicle adaptations is justified on the basis of its compilative nature, incorporating information from several sources.¹¹⁷ It is therefore questionable whether it is reasonable to claim that the Likhachev text is an edition of the *Life*, since it is present in only one manuscript, that published by Mansikka. Mansikka dated it to the 15th century, but Okhotnikova argues that it could also be from the beginning of the 16th century.¹¹⁸

How, then, did the Likhachev text of the *Life* combine the earthly narration of the Second Edition with the hagiographic First Edition? The amalgamation was a smooth one, and it was accomplished in a similar way to that adopted in the *Sophia I Chronicle*. The introduction to the earthly heroes of the Second Edition served as an introduction to Likhachev text too, but the beginning of the First Edition was repeated after this earthly introduction. Both the Likhachev text and the *Sophia I Chronicle* used the same pattern for combination purposes, and there seems to be an obvious relationship between them.

The introduction to the Likhachev text demonstrates well how it was created from two different sources, augmenting the narration from both viewpoints. It used all the traditional hagiographic expressions and the storyline of the First Edition, combined with the crystallised emphasis on Aleksandr's role as his father's successor in the service of his people of the Second Edition. The passages that are clearly similar to the Second Edition are the introduction (where Aleksandr is compared to the ancient war heroes Alexander of Macedonia and Achilles), some of the events of the Roman king's arrival at the River Neva, Aleksandr's campaign against the Tavastians in 1256, and, in particular, Yaroslav Vsevolodovich as a model for Aleksandr's service to his subjects and his role as an ideal ruler.¹¹⁹

The only difference is in Nevruy's campaign against Andrey, which in the Likhachev text follows the short style of the First Edition, while in the *Sophia I Chronicle* it was presented in more detail, as discussed above. Also, the Likhachev text presents the events in a different chronological order to the *Sophia I Chronicle*. Where the

¹¹⁷ Okhotnikova 1987, 359; Mansikka (1913) 1984, 124–5.

¹¹⁸ Mansikka (1913) 1984, 125; Okhotnikova 1987, 358.

¹¹⁹ See *Likhachevskaya redaktsiya*, 126–37.

Sophia I Chronicle first relates Yaroslav's death in the Horde and only after that Aleksandr's journey there and Baty's admiration of him, the Likhachev text presents the scene with Khan Baty first, then makes a short reference to Nevruy's campaign and Aleksandr's good deeds according to Isaiah's definitions, and only after that introduces the death of Yaroslav.¹²⁰ This was an obvious chronological error. It was probably confusion over the chronological location of the episode of the admiring Khan Baty that caused this difference in treatment, since the Second Edition did not include this scene at all. Apart from this difference in chronological treatment, the Likhachev manuscript combined the texts of the two editions in precisely the same way as was done in the *Sophia I Chronicle*, adding the sacrificial image of Aleksandr to the old hagiographic *Life*.

With this new depth added to the popular image, a new moral dimension was introduced to the image of an ideal ruler. Hand in hand with the idea of sacrifice went the change in description, from local princes to Russian princes, as Aleksandr slowly changed from the 'sun of Suzdal' into a Russian prince. This development, which reached its full scope in the fifteenth-century *Sophia I Chronicle*, not only changed Aleksandr Yaroslavich's image to that of a sufferer of hardships, but also gave a huge impetus to the mystique of the sacrificial ruler.

Taking more and more hagiographic and legendary sources into chronicles widened the perspective of history. In addition to the enormous weight attached to the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* and the emphasis on the self-sacrificing deeds of both father and son, the *Sophia I Chronicle* introduces the Lithuanian heroes. In the entry for the year 1265 Voishelg (written Vosheleg' in the *Sophia I Chronicle*), the alleged son of Mindaugas who converted to Christianity and abandoned paganism, left his pagan relatives, who had shed so much Christian blood, and went to the holy mountain of Sinai. On returning to his ancestral lands, he refused to abandon his faith even though his father tried to convert him back to paganism, and remained as a monk. At the end of the review of Lithuanian internal feuds after the death of Mindaugas, there is a short description of how 300 Lithuanian men with their wives and children escaped to Pskov, where Yaroslav Yaroslavich took them in and gave them shelter.¹²¹

¹²⁰ *Likhachevskaya redaktsiya*, 134–5.

¹²¹ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 192.

The story continues with a description of how the blessed prince Dovmont arrived in Pskov with his entourage and household in 1266 and converted to Christianity. In the joy of this awakening from his pagan idolatry he expressed his wish to serve God and left with men of Pskov to fight against the pagan Lithuanians.¹²² From there the story continues with the *Life* of Dovmont, according to its version in the *Pskov I Chronicle*.¹²³

The *Sophia I Chronicle* showed a keen interest in Lithuania and its politics, and it is also notable that this was further cherished in the chronicles of Moscow, so much so that the roots of the Lithuanian kings were traced back during the 16th century to the Rurikids of Polotsk. Prince Dovmont was also considered to be a son of Mindaugas and brother to the heroic Christian warrior Voishelg.¹²⁴ In this context it is understandable to find the story of Voishelg, the ideal Christian ruler, and that of Dovmont, defender of the Orthodox borderlands against the Catholic *Nemtsy* and pagan Lithuanians, in the company of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*. In particular, the episode in which Aleksandr rejected the teachings of the pope becomes more fully understandable when taken in the context of the heroes who defended the borderlands of Novgorod and Pskov.

The significance of the chronicles for Aleksandr's image was undoubtedly huge. In their compilative nature they affected the historical consciousness of the past, through their supplemented passages of the acts of heroic princes. As the chronicles selected for their pages descriptions of Russian princes who showed paradigmatic manliness, the ideal image of a prince was raised to a level of historical sublimity. When the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was attached as one of the representatives of the ideal princes of his era, his image underwent a significant change, which answered the prevailing ideal of the self-sacrificial ruler. Ultimately his image emphasised more and more the universal ideal, and underlined his role as a Russian prince instead of a local one. The treatment of Andrey's fate, his resistance against the Mongols, and the more open description of the hardships that the conquest brought to the Russian lands, ultimately influenced Aleksandr's image as well.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.; cf. Okhotnikova 1985, 72.

¹²⁴ Okhotnikova 1985, 118. See the sixteenth-century *Voskresenskaya Chronicle*, where the genealogy of the Lithuanian kings is given under the year 1264. *Voskresenskaya letopis'*, 165.

3. THE KULIKOVO CYCLE AND THE CHANGE IN HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

3.1. *The historical setting of the chronicles—the sin and its punishment*

When discussing the influence of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* on Russian medieval historical consciousness, it is of paramount importance to realise the significance of the way in which Aleksandr's contemporaries understood the historical events which took place in the lands of Russia during his lifetime. For this purpose it is essential to be aware of the concept of punishment from God as it was understood in the medieval chronicles, as one of the leading forces by which catastrophes that occurred in the course of history were to be explained. This theological explanation met with a deep response in the Russian chronicles, the most grievous and most frequently mentioned sins being the family feuds among the Russian princes, which were seen as the reason for the devastating raids carried out from the steppes.

This chapter attempts to understand the contemporary concepts of world history and their significance for the medieval Russian people. This is also essential in order to understand the patterns, restrictions and traditions affecting the representation of an ideal prince. As the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy underwent changes when inserted into the pages of the chronicles, it was also attached to a historical context. While the First Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr was silent about the Mongol conquest, the pages surrounding it in the chronicles were not. Therefore Aleksandr's image changed not only through the actual changes in the content of his *Life*, but also through the understanding of the larger historical unity.

The interest in this chapter lies in the deep involvement of the Russian medieval chronicles in condemning feuds within the princely dynasties, which set brother against brother just as Cain had turned against Abel. Dynastic feuds opened up a more devastating possibility of interference from an external enemy, which was likely to cause even greater suffering for the whole of society. As suggested in previous chapters, the internal feuds between Aleksandr's sons, Dmitriy and Andrey, may have been the reason for the author choosing to

paint the image of an ideal prince who was a builder rather than a destroyer, and who fought against an external foreign threat rather than his own kin and his own brothers.

The essential theme of the Russian medieval chronicles is Christian history. The years are counted in a manner derived from the Byzantine calendar, beginning from the Creation, the most profound single event before the birth of Christ having been the Flood, together with the scattering of the nations who descended from the sons of Noah.¹ The narration then continues with the Russian princes, to provide a cohesive overall account of the Christian drama of salvation. As theological descriptions of Christian history constituted the main literary genre in medieval Russia, it is clear that the *Life* of Aleksandr cannot be approached without taking this into consideration.

The chronicles record confrontations with the steppe nomads, *Polovtsy*—better known in the West as the Cumans—from the 1060s onwards. The attitude towards the new enemy was unambiguous, and the raids mounted by them were regarded from the very beginning as a punishment from God for the many sins committed by the Christians. The *Polovtsy* were seen as representatives of the family of Ishmael, and the worst sins committed among the Russian princes were the fraternal feuds which troubled Kievan Russia. The rising threat from the steppes was foreseen in the *Primary Chronicle*, in the testament of Prince Yaroslav:

Year 6562 [1054]. The prince of mighty Russia, Yaroslav, died. Before his death he addressed his sons, saying: 'My sons, I will soon leave this world. Love each other, for you are full brothers, children of the same mother and father. If you live in mutual love, God will be with you and give your enemies into your hands, and you will have peace. But if you live in hatred, disagreement, and dispute, you will perish yourselves and you will destroy the land that your grandfathers gathered together with great efforts. Therefore live in peace, with brother respecting brother.'²

Less than 10 years after the warning tones of Prince Yaroslav's testament, in 1061, the *Polovtsy* attacked Kiev and other southern principalities in the Russian lands. At the same time bad omens were

¹ The *Primary Chronicle* starts its description with the Flood and the scattering of the nations, whereas the *Pskov I Chronicle* begins with the Creation. *Povest' vremennykh let*, 7; *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 5.

² *Povest' vremennykh let*, 70.

reported everywhere in Christendom. The eastern tribes were causing trouble to Christians not only in Kiev but also in the Holy Places of Palestine. The *Hypatian Chronicle* reported on the events of the Third Crusade, the solar eclipse of 15 September 1187 and the conquest of Jerusalem by the godless Saracens on the same day.³ In 1190 it was reported that the German emperor was fighting for the Holy Sepulchre against the family of Hagar, and that the emperor's soldiers were shedding their blood like martyrs fighting for Christ.⁴ The wars against the Saracens in the Holy Land constituted an allegory of the actions of the Russian princes fighting against the *Polovtsy*, as could be interpreted from the exploits of Igor Svyatoslavich in the famous *Lay of Igor's Campaign*. Hence the family chronicles of the Russian princes used the events of world history to make parallels with their own exploits, thereby highlighting the greatness of their own actions.⁵

The beginning of the 13th century was marked by one important feature that is especially distinctive in the Russian chronicles: the linking of universal themes of world history to local Russian events, and the mixing of great themes of human nature, such as the concepts of good and evil, sin and punishment, into history. From this time onwards the Novgorodian chronicles abandoned their straightforward local interest and widened their perspective to other Russian principalities.⁶ According to Likhachev, a new edition of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* was produced at the archbishop's court at the beginning of the 13th century which also used the southern Kievan chronicles as sources. It was from this time that the *Novgorod I Chronicle* introduced an account of the siege of Constantinople in 1204. The *Story of the Storming of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204* (*Povest' a vzyatii Tsar'grada krestonosnami v 1204 gody*), which was included in all the important Russian chronicles, is a fine example of the tales that advised princes to refrain from family feuds.⁷ It describes the sack of the once-beautiful city and the looting of its churches, and ends with the moralistic statement:

³ *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 135.

⁴ *Ipat'evskaya letopis'*, 139.

⁵ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 247–8.

⁶ Pyatnov 1994, 109.

⁷ The *Story of the Storming of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204* is alleged to be one of the oldest eyewitness descriptions of the storming. The account tells of the events that preceded the conquest of the city, which all started from the strife between brothers in the Byzantine imperial family. According to the *Story*, Emperor

So the empire of the city of Constantine that had been under God's protection and the land of the Greeks were ruined because of the feuds of the emperors, and these lands are now ruled by the Franks.⁸

The chronicle description of the fraternal feuds of Ryazan (*Rasskaz o prestuplenii Ryazanskikh knyazey*) in 1218 is a warning example of the pattern that had already been established at Constantinople.⁹ It describes how Prince Gleb Vladimirovich of Ryazan conceived the satanic idea of murdering his brother, following the path of Cain, and compares him to the cursed Prince Svyatopolk, the arch example of an infamous fratricide.¹⁰ These events preceding the disastrous Mongol invasion reflect a deep concern for human nature and its influence on God's plans in universal history. The interpretation placed upon these events is crucial to any consideration of the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy and his historical setting. The fratricides of Ryazan are described as following the pattern that also explained the ruin of Constantinople and its fall into Latin hands. When Khan Baty started his attack on the Russian lands, Ryazan was the first to fall. But who were these intruders? One can sense this confusion in the chronicle tale of the battle on the River Kalka, which was incorporated into the *Novgorod I Chronicle* but was apparently of southern origin:

In the same year, 6732, for our sins, the unknown tribe arrived. No one knew who they were or what was their origin, faith, or tongue. Some call them Tatars, and others call them Taurmens, and still others call them Pechenegs. Some say that these are the same people of whom Methodius of Patara spoke and that they came from the Yetrian Desert,

Aleksey had taken the crown from his brother Isak and blinded him. Isak still had hopes of displacing his brother, and he sent his son to get help from the German emperor Philip, to whom his daughter was married. The German emperor, for his part, turned to the pope in Rome for help, and he advised Philip to wage war on Constantinople simply in order to help Isak's son to obtain the crown, after which the emperor's auxiliary troops should continue their journey to Jerusalem. Things were not going as planned, however, for now both Isak and his son were pursuing the crown. In the middle of the plotting, Isak's son was killed and the Frankish troops negotiated over what to do, since they had failed to carry out the orders of the German emperor and the pope to place Isak's son on the imperial throne. To avoid a shameful homecoming, the Frankish soldiers decided to storm Constantinople. See *Povest' o vzyatii Tsar'grada krestonostsami v 1204 godu*, 106–12.

⁸ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 49.

⁹ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 58. See Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 442. Likhachev, *Rasskaz o prestuplenii Ryazanskikh knyazey* 1981, 543; Likhachev, *Povest' o ryazorenii Ryazani Batyem* 1981, 554.

¹⁰ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 58.

which is between north and east. Methodius said that at the end of time those whom Gideon drove away will appear and will conquer the whole land from the rivers Tigris and Euphrates to the Pontic Sea, with the exception of Ethiopia. Only God knows who these people are or from whence they came. The wise men who understand the books know who they are, but we do not. We record them here in memory of the misfortunes that the Russian princes suffered at their hands.¹¹

The first confrontation with the Mongols beside the River Kalka in 1223 was disastrous, and the story tells how only one out of every ten Russian soldiers survived. This description was apparently written soon after the events, and certainly before the next Mongol attack in the winter of 1237/8, because the note ends with a statement that the Mongols went back to where they had come from and no-one knew when they would come back.¹² The oldest accounts of the battle on the River Kalka have survived in three chronicles, the *Novgorod I*, *Laurentian* and *Hypatian* chronicles, each with its own flavour.¹³

The Methodius who is mentioned in the tale was a bishop of Patara who died as a martyr, probably in the year 311. He was a scientific opponent of Origen and an important theologian, whose texts had also been translated into Slavonic. Some of his shorter treatises, like those exhorting people to strive towards virtue in this life with the hope of the life to come, have survived only in Slavonic versions. It was not the writings of the real, historical Methodius, however, that were considered so fundamental with regard to the history of Christianity, but the later, seventh-century apocalyptic revelations, which originated somewhere in Mesopotamia and were considered to have been written by him.

The Russian chronicles provide good evidence of the popular conceptions that existed concerning the apocalyptic prophesies and their relation to people's understanding of history, especially regarding the relationship with the nomads of the steppes during the Middle Ages. The *Apocalypse* of Methodius (or actually Pseudo-Methodius) gained

¹¹ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 61–2.

¹² *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod*, 62.

¹³ The account in the *Hypatian Chronicle* is probably a later version than those found in the *Laurentian* and *Novgorod I* chronicles. The beginning of the tale in particular is similar in the above-mentioned sources, and it was probably adopted into both of them from Ryazan sources. In the Novgorod version, however, sympathy was on the side of Prince Mstislav Romanovich of Kiev. Bulantin 1987, 346.

huge popularity during the Middle Ages and was soon translated into Greek and Latin. In its Greek form it became the basis of the most important branch of the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition, which also comprised more recent materials, together with the *Visions* of Daniel. The translation of the Syriac text of Pseudo-Methodius into Greek marked a major development in the synthesis of apocalyptic perceptions, to the extent that it was held to be one of the landmarks that signalled the end of Antiquity and the beginning of the Middle Ages. It was the Greek version of the *Apocalypse* that was translated into Slavonic. The earliest reference to it is found in the Russian *Primary Chronicle*, which means that a Slavonic version was in existence by the 12th century.¹⁴

The *Apocalypse* had a great influence on the concept according to which the Mongols were likened to the eastern tribes against whom Gideon fought in the Holy Scriptures. Early statements on the relations of the Russian princes to the steppes proves the eschatological significance that had been attached to these battles ever since the princes of Kiev first established relations with their nomad *Polovtsy* neighbours.

Apocalyptic interpretations of Christian history were enormously popular during the Middle Ages, reflecting common ideas of history, the present and the future, as represented in popular myths and legends, although the official attitude of the Church was never very enthusiastic towards these prophesies. The eastern Church did not even include the *Revelation* of John the Divine in the official canon of the Holy Bible, and omitted to comment on it until the 12th century.¹⁵

In its content the *Apocalypse* of Pseudo-Methodius is a mixture of the Judaic Messianic tradition and the legends of the Hellenistic period. It consists of a historical presentation of the development of the nations of the world, beginning with the Creation and proceeding up to the birth of the Byzantine Empire. The Slavonic version pays great attention to the feud between the sons of Abraham—between Ishmael, who was born to Abraham's slave-woman Hagar, and Isaac, who was born to Sara. This was the origin of the rivalry between the 'Agarens' and 'Saracens', the descendants of Hagar and Sara.

¹⁴ Alexander 1985, 13–14; Irmischer & Kazhdan 1999, 1355–6; Verdier 1981, 663.

¹⁵ Abrahamse 1985, 1–9.

The descendants of Ishmael were to develop into the eastern tribes, whom Gideon defeated in the desert, as is recounted in the passage in the *Primary Chronicle*. The *Apocalypse* of Pseudo-Methodius also contained a popular legend of Alexander the Great, who locked the filthy people, the Huns, behind a great iron wall. The prophesy tells of the new dominion of the family of Ishmael and the depravity of their rule, which was due to end once the Roman emperor Mikael had established his kingdom. After that the nations of Gog and Magog were to be released from behind the iron gate and the anti-Christ would be born. In the midst of these horrors Christ would finally come and the world would face the Last Judgement.¹⁶

The ideas attached to the eastern tribes were affected by an eschatological understanding of the *Apocalypse*, in which a final conflict with an eastern tribe was to be one of the last events in the history of the world before Christ's second coming. This is how the situation was understood in the *Primary Chronicle*:

God teaches his servants through the horrors of war, so that they will become hardened, like gold in the forge, for it is true that Christians can enter the kingdom of heaven only after numerous distresses and ordeals, whereas the pagans live in happiness and satisfaction in this world but are doomed to eternal fire together with the devil in the life to come . . . Those godless sons of Ishmael . . . came from the desert of Etribi, from between the north and south, and formed four tribes: the Turkmens, Pechenegs, Torks and Kumans. Methodius tells about them, stating that eight tribes fled to the desert and that Gideon killed four of them . . . The Saracens descend from Ishmael. They regard themselves as the sons of Sara, and therefore call themselves Saracens, which means 'we are the sons of Sara' . . . It is from these eight tribes that the filthy people whom Alexander the Great locked in the mountain are descended, and who will be freed when the day of doom comes.¹⁷

Here the apocalyptic prophesy of Pseudo-Methodius offered a popular explanation for the origin of the people who had risen to cause offence to the Holy Places in Palestine. The clerics who wrote the histories in the Russian chronicles adapted these ideas to provide an

¹⁶ Translation of the Syriac text of Pseudo-Methodius from Cod.Vat.Syr 58, 36–51. V. I. Istrin published a Slavonic version of the apocalypse dated to the 15th–16th centuries in 1897. See Istrin 1897, 115–31. It has also been recently published by V. V. Mil'kov in Mil'kov 2000, 345–67 and Mil'kov 1999, 654–703.

¹⁷ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 98.

explanation for the new threat that had arisen on the southern steppes.

The chronicle passage describing the disaster at the River Kalka in 1223 continued to approach the unknown enemies from the steppes, the Mongols, as the eastern tribe which Methodius had spoken about. As the disastrous conquest began in the winter of 1237/8, the Mongols became more familiar to Russian chroniclers. From then on the leading genres of the literature of medieval Russia developed towards war tales and descriptions of martyrdoms, which were greatly affected by the tragedy of the Mongol conquest. The accounts of strife and murders within the princely family of Ryazan, and the narrative of the first confrontation between Russian and Mongol troops at the River Kalka in 1223, are presented as a prelude to these descriptions. The invasion begun in 1237 by Khan Baty was far more destructive. It was at this point that the historical narratives represented by the chronicles developed into one of the leading literary genres.¹⁸

The humiliation of the Russian princes was, as already discussed, an important feature of the princely descriptions which developed under the Mongol occupation. This ultimately came to its end with the descriptions of the victorious great prince of Moscow, Dmitriy Ivanovich, who was celebrated in the literary cycle, the narratives of which shaped late medieval Russian concepts of history. As Dmitriy's victory over Khan Mamai in 1380 was given eschatological significance, a new era in Russian historical consciousness began, and the tales of the Kulikovo cycle described Dmitriy Donskoy's victory on the field of Kulikovo as the most important historical event of the epoch.¹⁹ This period is often called by Russian historians the time of 'national awakening'.²⁰ Whether we can draw such a conclusion from the historical sources or not is a good question, but there is no doubt that the prince of Moscow's triumph in 1380 should be regarded as one of the most influential single incidents to shape the historical consciousness and identity of the Russian people as they were later presented in the literature.²¹

The cycle is divided into four parts: chronicle accounts, which are divided into short and expanded accounts; the *Zadonshchina* (mean-

¹⁸ Likhachev, *Literatura tragicheskogo veka* 1981, 14.

¹⁹ Likhachev, *Literatura vremeni natsional'nogo pod'ema* 1981, 16.

²⁰ Likhachev, *Literatura vremeni natsional'nogo pod'ema* 1981, 5–8.

²¹ Danilevskiy 2000, 270.

ing literally 'the Tale of Events Beyond the Don'); the *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* (*Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*), and the *Life of Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich*, literally the 'Story of the Life and Death of the Russian Tsar, Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich' (*Slovo o zhitii i o prestavlenii velikogo knyazya Dmitriya Ivanovicha, tsarya russkago*). These individual pieces are extremely difficult to date, since the surviving manuscripts are from the end of the 15th century at the earliest, apart from a short chronicle entry included in the 1408 chronicle edition.

However, the literary narratives of the Kulikovo cycle provide poor evidence of what really happened in the Russia of the 1380s. Even after the famous victory of Kulikovo, Moscow had to struggle to survive and to retain its pre-eminence within the Russian lands. Novgorod, Pskov, Tver and Nizhniy Novgorod constantly exercised independence in their relations with Lithuania and the Golden Horde,²² and this is certainly something that must be taken into account when reading about fourteenth-century Moscow as the cradle of national consciousness and coherence in Russia. Much of the importance of medieval Moscow arises from the later Moscow-centred perspective, in which the many other Russian cities were seen only as side issues in the history of Russia, united by victorious Moscow.

One of the major elements in the formation of a Muscovite state was the success of its great princes in creating a 'national Muscovite' identity and then imposing this new identity on the conquered peoples of other Russian lands.²³ Until recently, the history of Moscow

²² Crummey 1987, 44, 56.

²³ The history of the Russian coinage reveals much about the land's political and economic situation. The most ancient coins were struck between 988 and 1019, and were all modelled on Byzantine types. These coins circulated in Russia alongside Arabic dirhems and western European coinage. But with the Mongol conquest from 1238 onwards the minting of coins in Russia stopped, and solid silver bars provided the principal medium of exchange. The minting of Russian coins resumed only after the victory at Kulikovo during Dmitriy Donskoy's reign. One aspect which illustrates especially well the creation of a Muscovite identity is the coinage of the 14th and 15th centuries. As a prince of Moscow, Dmitriy Ivanovich impressed on his coins the texts: 'Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich' but hailed Khan Tokhtamysh on the reverse side. It was only Dmitriy's son, Vasily I, who added a propaganda element to his own title, which became 'Great Prince of all Russia'. Moscow coins were in extensive use elsewhere in the Russian principalities during the lifetimes of Dmitriy and his son, but during the reign of Vasily II the rulers of the smaller principalities adopted coins of their own. Dmitriy Donskoy's father-in-law, Dmitriy Konstantinovich, for example, used his own coins in Nizhniy Novgorod, and these referred to himself as a great prince. After Dmitriy Konstantinovich all the rulers

has largely been written in terms of the rise of a centralised political system, and its literary culture has similarly been perceived as monolithic, marked not only by pompous, cliché-ridden rhetoric but also by a single, all-pervasive ideology. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the state of Moscow and its culture were the products of a complex process of dynamic and subtle interactions among diverse social, religious and ethnic influences.²⁴

When Dmitriy Ivanovich (1359–89) succeeded his father Ivan II he was still a minor, and during his infancy Metropolitan Aleksey (1354–78) governed the country as regent. Later canonised by the Orthodox Church, Aleksey became one of the most venerated Muscovite saints, who was known for his close identification with the interests of the Orthodox Church and of the secular power of Moscow. Aleksey came from an old Moscow boyar family named Biakont, which must have helped him to rally the support of the boyars in favour of his policy of strengthening Dmitriy Donskoy's position. During his reign proper, Dmitriy went on to make important strides towards achieving the goals of the dynasty of Moscow, as he expanded the territory under his control and strengthened his rule over his domains. Most importantly, he gave the dynasty of Moscow a far more secure hold on the office of great prince than before, asserting his military leadership over north-east Russia and winning brilliant victories over the Mongols.

In the growth of Moscow's prestige, however, certain shadows existed. Lithuania, under Grand Duke Olgerd, continued to extend its control over the Russian lands and kept a close watch on affairs in Novgorod and Pskov, as it had dynastic connections with the ruling house of Tver. In ecclesiastical affairs, Metropolitan Aleksey struggled to preserve the unity of the Russian hierarchy. The troubles were caused by Grand Duke Olgerd, who was determined to maintain a separate metropolitan to minister to the Orthodox subjects living in Lithuania and the areas conquered from the westernmost Russian principalities. The problem of the unity of eastern Orthodoxy was a real one, for the patriarch of Constantinople had to face the fact that the metropolitan of Kiev, Moscow and the whole of Russia had his flock divided not only among several Russian principalities,

of Nizhniy Novgorod used the title great prince on their local coins until the independence of the city came to an end in 1451. Noonan 1997, 496, 501, 513–20.

²⁴ Cf. Kleimola & Lenhoff 1997, 7.

but also among pagan Lithuania and Roman Catholic Poland. As a result, Patriarch Philotheus had to withdraw his support for Metropolitan Aleksey, who used his prestige straightforwardly for the benefit of the ruling dynasty of Moscow. Philotheus was forced to admonish Aleksey for his uncompromising policies and to send the Bulgarian prelate Kiprian to Lithuania in 1373 to pacify the grand duke.

As a final act of conciliation, the patriarch appointed Kiprian as metropolitan of Kiev, Russia and Lithuania in 1375. The separate metropolitanate of Moscow was created as a temporary measure, to last only until the aged Metropolitan Aleksey died in 1378. After that Kiprian became metropolitan of a united Lithuanian-Russian hierarchy. As a foreigner, he had no partisan commitments to political struggles within Russia, but in practice he too, like his predecessors, often threw the weight of his office behind the great princes of Moscow in defending the eastern Orthodox community against pressure from surrounding non-Orthodox powers.²⁵

The unifying process which took place under the leadership of the metropolitan, supported by the great prince of Moscow, ultimately had a strong effect on the development of historical consciousness, as the sources testify. The concepts of Dmitriy Ivanovich as a hero guarding his country were adopted from historical narratives and heroic stories, as was the case with the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy. Much happened in the field of literature during the 14th century. From the middle of the century, cultural bonds with Bulgaria, Serbia and Byzantium gained in strength and a great deal of literature was translated into Russian, including an increasing quantity of biblical texts, while at the end of the century a new literary style developed in the Balkans which allowed more personal feelings to appear in literature. This style became rooted above all in Moscow and coincided with a new spirit expressing self-confidence and trust in the future of Russia under Moscow's leadership.²⁶

Moscow's status was highlighted in the Kulikovo cycle stories of the famous battle of the Kulikovo Field in 1380. Its tales elevated the battle into the most important single event of the epoch and proclaimed loudly that the future glory of Russia lay on the valiant shoulders of the great princes of Moscow. The *Zadonshchina* has survived in six manuscripts, the oldest of which, the Kirillo-Belozerskiy,

²⁵ Crummey 1987, 48–9.

²⁶ Likhachev, *Literatura vremeni natsional'nogo pod'ema* 1981, 5–8.

is dated to the 1470s. It is only this oldest version in which the word *Zadonshchina* is mentioned in the title. The full title of the Kirillo-Belozerskiy manuscript reads: 'The writing of the blessed *starets* Sofoni of Ryazan: The deeds accomplished beyond the Don by the Great Prince, Lord Dmitriy Ivanovich, and his brother, Prince Vladimir Andreyevich' (*Pisanie Sofona startsa ryazantsa, blagoslovo otse: Zadonshchina velikogo knyazya gospodina Dimitriya Ivanovicha i brata ego knyazya Volodimera Ondreevicha*). The other five manuscripts date from the 16th and 17th centuries. The identity of the Sofoni of Ryazan mentioned in the Kirillo-Belozerskiy manuscript is obscure, and it has been suggested both that he was a monk, or *boyarin*, and that he came either from the city of Ryazan or from Bryansk. The *Zadonshchina* has also been linked to the manuscript traditions of Novgorod and Pskov, as it has been argued that the author could have been a member of the personal retinue of Prince Konstantin Dmitrievich of Pskov, the youngest son of Dmitriy Donskoy. Some scholars argue that the name Sofoni of Ryazan was falsely associated with the *Zadonshchina* to gain extra value for the work, as the writer used both the original work of Sofoni and the famous *Lay of Igor's Campaign* in composing it.²⁷

On the basis of its appealing emotional tension, it has been argued that the *Zadonshchina* was written very soon after the battle of Kulikovo, probably in the 1380s, by an eyewitness to the events, an author who had participated in the campaign himself.²⁸ Its strong emotional tension and lyric beauty is derived from another Russian medieval masterpiece, however, as the author used the *Lay of Igor's Campaign* as his canvas,²⁹ and its significance lies first and foremost in its inten-

²⁷ See Dmitriev, *Zadonshchina* 1981, 544–5; Dmitriev 1988, 345–50. The *Zadonshchina* is usually published in anthologies of Russian medieval literature on the basis of attempts to reconstruct the original text from all the surviving manuscripts. This is also the case in the PLDR, where the reconstruction is based mainly on the seventeenth-century Undol'skiy manuscript.

²⁸ Dmitriev, *Zadonshchina* 1981, 544–5; Dmitriev 1988, 345–50.

²⁹ It had already been suggested in 1890 that the *Zadonshchina* was not written on the basis of the *Lay of Igor's Campaign*, but the other way round. This hypothesis was further developed by the French Slavist A. Mazon and supported by the Soviet scholar A. A. Zimin. The predominant theory, however, which is supported by textual analysis, is that the *Lay* is the older of the two. This has been proved from the old Turk loan words which the *Lay of Igor's Campaign* contains, whereas such loan words in the *Zadonshchina* number only seven, and at least four of these are adopted directly from the textual borrowings from the *Lay*. Cf. Poppe 2001, 201–11; Dmitriev 1988, 350. Zimin's theories have still not been published in Russia. On the silencing of Zimin's views in the Soviet Union, see Formozov 1992, 96–115.

tion to revive the literary traditions which had flourished before the Mongol conquest.³⁰ Igor had fought against the *Polovtsy* of the steppes and had lost in a hopeless battle, whereas Dmitriy's battle, depicted in the lyrical patterns of the *Slovo*, had a threatening atmosphere at first but soon turned into a glorious victory for the valiant Russians, who bravely defended their freedom and Christian faith.

The *Zadonshchina* juxtaposes Igor and Dmitriy according to their relationship with their enemy. The eastern tribe, who defeated the valiant Prince Igor at the River Kayala, were defined (using an Old Testament story of the division of the nations descending from Noah's sons) as descendants of Shem, whereas Dmitriy led the descendants of Japheth, the Orthodox Russians, to victory by the River Don. This juxtaposition is announced clearly in the opening words of the narration.³¹ This important feature was repeated in the cycle as it used familiar stories to create a new Russian hero. Dmitriy bore a striking similarity to war heroes who had both failed and succeeded in the previous Russian war literature. In the *Zadonshchina*, which alluded to the fatal disaster of Igor's defeat at the River Kayala, Dmitriy's victory was presented in a highly appealing way, as a path out of the darkness in which the *Lay of Igor's Campaign* had ended. The *Zadonshchina* pursues the spirit of personal sacrifice which was elegantly portrayed in the *Lay of Igor's Campaign*, with its exaltation of the beauty of death. But Dmitriy's war was not the personal task of establishing a warrior's honour; rather, the sacrifice was made for Russia, which was constantly identified with the concept of the Orthodox Christian faith.

The Kulikovo cycle brought up the theme of the relationships of the Russian princes to the inhabitants of the steppes. As such, the parallel between Dmitriy and Igor was important, for it proved that the resistance shown by Igor in ancient times had not been in vain. The strong feeling of disaster which was presented so brilliantly in the *Lay of Igor's Campaign* was also attached during the 15th century to the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in its lyrical prelude, the *Tale of the Destruction of the Russian Lands* (*Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli*), where clear contrasts were made between defeat and victory, despair and hope, and darkness and light.

³⁰ Likhachev, *Literatura vremeni natsional'nogo pod'ema* 1981, 9.

³¹ *Zadonshchina*, 98.

The remarks made on the battle of Kulikovo also found their way into the chronicles. The earliest short account of the battle of Kulikovo is found in the chronicles that used the chronicle edition of 1408 as their basis, such as the *Trinity*, *Simeonov*, and *Rogozhskiy* chronicles. In them the description of the battle is concise, mentioning the main features of Dmitriy Ivanovich's victory: how the pagan descendants of the Ishmaelites, the Tatars (as the Mongols were called in medieval Russian literature), gathered their troops against the Christians, how the treacherous Mamai showed his anger towards Dmitriy and vowed to capture all of the Russian lands, and how Dmitriy, on hearing of this, hurried into battle in order to protect the land, its holy churches and its Orthodox faith. It was also noted that Mamai and the Tatars were beaten in the bitter struggle because God had amassed his invisible forces against them.³²

The *Simeonov Chronicle* gives two headings referring to central incidents in the cycle, the battle of Kulikovo, and the death of Great Prince Dmitriy. The heading 'On the great battle which took place by the Don' (*O velikom' poboichsi, izhe na Dony*)³³ is regarded as belonging to the Kulikovo cycle categorisation of a short chronicle account. This categorization does not do justice to the nature of the account, however, as it lacks many of the typical features of the cycle. The short chronicle account does not have any of the stylistic features that justify its attachment to the literary cycle, as many of the central features that were crucial to the later Kulikovo cycle stories are lacking. Thus Dmitriy goes into battle without any blessings from churchmen, and neither Kiprian nor Bishop Gerasim is mentioned. On the contrary, according to the chronicle, Kiprian arrived in Moscow from Constantinople only after the battle, in the year 6889, i.e. 1381.³⁴ The account lacks the miraculous wonders, visions and prayers, and the only reference to God's help is, 'God frightened the sons of Hagar with his invisible force.'³⁵ The death of Great Prince Dmitriy is similarly described briefly, without any influence from the hagiographic 'Story of the life and death of the great prince Dmitriy Ivanovich'.³⁶

³² *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 129–30.

³³ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 129–31.

³⁴ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 131.

³⁵ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 130.

³⁶ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 138–9.

The account of the battle of Kulikovo is very brief, and more weight is given to Mamai's subsequent fate. I. N. Danilevskiy is correct in his idea that Mamai is described as a pagan and an enemy of the Christians, whereas the 'certain tsar from the eastern lands, named Tokhtamysh from the Blue Horde' ultimately has the same goals as Dmitriy Ivanovich, as he kills Mamai in their battle for power over the Horde. While Mamai is described as an infamous pagan, representing the descendants of Hagar and Ishmael, there is no such notion attached to the 'Tsar Tokhtamysh', whose envoys are treated with respect and honour in Dmitriy's court in Moscow when they bring a message to him after their mutual enemy has been annihilated.³⁷

The chronicle account gained more weight in the course of time as its story grew more elaborate and developed.³⁸ The expanded chronicle account was a fully developed narrative with a careful storyline, and was attached to the chronicles which reflected the alleged chronicle edition of 1448: the *Sophia I*, *Novgorod IV*, *Novgorod V* and *Karamzin* chronicles.³⁹ In addition to the earlier material, the expanded chronicle account told of 'The Battle of Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich against Mamai by the River Don' (as its title ran in the *Sophia I Chronicle*), and made use of features familiar from the narrative themes of the *Zadonshchina*.

Although M. A. Salmina dated the expanded chronicle account to the 1440s in a series of articles published between 1966 and 1979, she was later ready to admit, in 1989, that this date should not be considered final—it could be dated later, even to the 16th century.⁴⁰ Her logic is not very convincing. Since the oldest extant texts of the expanded chronicle account are to be found in the *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles, the date is of course bound to these chronicles. Salmina's later arguments are thus entirely lacking in validity. According to Boris M. Kloss, the influential figure behind the expanded chronicle account of the battle of Kulikovo was Epiphanius the Wise, who was also the man behind the *Trinity Chronicle*.⁴¹

³⁷ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 129–30. See Danilevskiy 2000, 277.

³⁸ There has been some debate on whether the short chronicle tale is the earliest account, or whether it is just a shortened version of the expanded chronicle tale. Today most scholars are convinced of the early date of the short chronicle tale. Salmina 1981, 549. See also Danilevskiy 2000, 271–2.

³⁹ Salmina, *Letopisnaya povest'* 1981, 549; cf. Miller 1993, 692.

⁴⁰ Salmina 1966, 344–84; Salmina 1970, 81–104; Salmina 1977, 3–39; Salmina, *Letopisnaya povest'* 1981, 549–50; Salmina 1989, 245.

⁴¹ Kloss 1994, 57–72.

In the expanded chronicle account, the villains of the story are properly introduced. The main miscreant is of course Mamai, and the others are the Lithuanian Jagailo and the prince of Ryazan, Oleg Ivanovich, as was also the case in the *Žadonshchina*. The emphasis with regard to the background to Mamai's expedition is altered, however, and the role of Oleg of Ryazan is changed significantly, as he is now depicted as plotting against his fellow Russians and luring Mamai into mounting an expedition against Prince Dmitriy. According to the expanded chronicle account, the accursed Mamai hankered after the glorious days of Khan Baty, and it was Prince Oleg's deceitful plot that made him go after Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich. Prince Oleg of Ryazan is presented as a new Svyatopolk, betraying the Christians.⁴² This strong emphasis on the immorality of Prince Oleg is in every way in full accord with the *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles, which made a great effort to bring out the theme of harmony among the Russian princes, and condemned all forms of civil strife among them by which they might rise up against their brothers.⁴³

Prince Dmitriy appealed to his 'brother' Vladimir Andreyevich, who showed the valour of Abraham in wanting to participate in Dmitriy's campaign. A great Russian host of 200,000 men was blessed by Bishop Gerasim at Kolomna, from where the troops left for battle on 20 August, placing their faith in God and the Immaculate Mother of God, and calling upon the Holy Cross to assist them. The women in the city of Moscow lamented as the men left—a theme especially promoted in the *Žadonshchina*. Dmitriy then arrived at the River Don, where he received a letter from 'the honourable *igumen* Sergey, a devout old man', who sent his blessing. Dmitriy prayed for God's providence, just as God had blessed Moses, thereby acting according to the example of Aleksandr Nevskiy as recounted in his *Life*. Early on the morning of 8 December the troops took their places on the battlefield, at which Dmitriy again prayed and made a speech to his troops. The Russian and Mongol armies then confronted each other and a fierce battle was fought which lasted for three hours. The battlefield was strewn with corpses, and Mamai hastened to flee.⁴⁴

⁴² *Letopisnaya povest' o Kulikovskoy bitve*, 112–14.

⁴³ Cf. Lur'e 1976, 110–11; Danilevskiy 2000, 289.

⁴⁴ *Letopisnaya povest' o Kulikovskoy bitve*, 114–24.

The expanded chronicle account then describes how, at the ninth hour of the day,⁴⁵ heavenly troops arrived to assist the Russians. A host of angels was seen in the heavens, accompanied by the holy martyrs St George and St Dmitriy and the Russian martyr princes Boris and Gleb, as well as the leader of the heavenly host, the Archangel Michael. The valour of Prince Dmitriy is emphasised by recounting how he insisted on fighting in the front line despite the warnings of his closest comrades, and his grace is compared to that of David. The Mongols are referred to as citizens of the sinful Sodom as they hurry to escape. Once the battle is over, it is time to count the toll. The dead leaders of the Russians are listed, and again the troops of Mamai are referred to as the descendants of Hagar and the sons of Ishmael. Left as the victor 'on a heap of bones', Dmitriy once more prays to God and gives thanks for His assistance:

You gave us a mighty spirit of resistance, just as you once gave to your servants Moses, David, the New Constantine, and Yaroslav, who confronted the cursed fratricide, the dishonourable beast Svyatopolk . . .⁴⁶

The author no doubt intended to create the image of a rightful ruler and a just war, in which God was on the side of the righteous, by this important parallel to the biblical kings of Israel, Prince Vladimir who baptized the Russian lands—thus often called the New Constantine in medieval Russian literature—and his son Yaroslav. As already discussed, this was also an essential element in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, and in the case of the image of a warrior prince, the parallel seems to be obligatory. The image of Prince Dmitriy was thus bound to the medieval ways of depicting an honourable hero, and in this it was in many ways similar to that of Aleksandr Nevskiy. There was, however, a great difference in the context of these heroic presentations.

The concepts of sin and punishment were totally ignored in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, which makes its historical narrative astonishingly atypical in its lack of the historical depth that is reflected in many contemporary chronicles and lives of the princes. Since the *Life* was silent about the catastrophe, there could naturally be no reference to sin as the cause of such agony. The image of Aleksandr as an ideal warrior was exploited by the later historical narratives,

⁴⁵ Approximately two o'clock in the afternoon.

⁴⁶ *Letopisnaya povest' o Kulikovskoy bitve*, 128.

however, when they expressed their opinion of universal Christian history. With its understanding of the concepts of sin and punishment and the image of the ideal warrior prince, the literary cycle which developed during the 15th century presented Prince Dmitriy Donskoy as an example confronting both.

In a striking way the historical narratives of Dmitriy Ivanovich made a proud statement on the most profound questions of the medieval Russian concepts of Christian history, namely God's intervention, sin and punishment. While Dmitriy Ivanovich loved his comrade princes as his brothers, he condemned all those who turned against their fellow princes as infamous and fratricidal. He is presented as an ideal in his attitude against the cause of all the evil that had happened during the many years of dynastic feuds. But in addition to this, Dmitriy Donskoy had a much greater role, for in the context of the Christian drama of salvation he was the warrior who had confronted the sons of Ishmael, the men from the East who had been named in the *Apocalypse* of Pseudo-Methodius as the instrument of God's anger. The eschatological concept was approached with great refinement in the most elaborate piece in the Kulikovo cycle, the tale of the destruction of Mamai, a narrative which drew a brilliant parallel between Dmitriy Donskoy and Aleksandr Nevskiy.

3.2. *Images of resistance—Dmitriy Donskoy as the second Aleksandr Nevskiy*

The fifteenth-century chronicles that witnessed the change in the historical narrative of Aleksandr Nevskiy also dealt with Dmitriy Ivanovich. Each of the Kulikovo narratives brought up certain themes, which were then developed. The short chronicle account spoke briefly about the victory of a Russian prince who, with God's help, defeated the godless Tatars, while the *Žadonshchina* highlighted the fateful confrontation with the eastern tribes by making a significant comparison between Dmitriy Ivanovich and Igor Svyatoslavich, the author using the *Lay of Igor's Campaign* as a canvas on which to sketch his story of victory. The expanded chronicle account met the needs of the *Sophia I Chronicle* to manifest the unity of the Russian princes against an external enemy, and thus brought forward a Russian prince, Oleg of Ryazan, as a warning example of the vices of brotherly strife alongside Mamai, a warning example of immorality.

Closely connected to the tales of the Kulikovo cycle was the *Story about the Invasion of Tokhtamysh* (*Povest' o nashestvii Tokhtamysha*), which told of the attack on Moscow in 1382. Khan Tokhtamysh had displaced Mamai in power in the Golden Horde in 1380, and had united the strength of the Horde. Two years after the battle on the Kulikovo Field, Khan Tokhtamysh devastated Moscow in a sudden attack on the city. The story no doubt belonged to the same literary circle as the accounts of the Kulikovo Field,⁴⁷ repeating its central themes. In it, the infamous traitor among the Russian princes, Oleg of Ryazan, allies himself with Khan Tokhtamysh, aiming to destroy the stone-built city of Moscow. In his introduction, the writer warns the Russian princes who do not want to help one another:

And there was disagreement among the princes, and they did not want to help each other. Brother did not want to help brother. They no longer remembered the words of the prophet David, 'How good and appropriate it is that brothers should live in peace,'—or of the other prophet, who likewise should be remembered, who said, 'A friend who gives support to his friend, or a brother who helps his own brother, is like the firmest of castles.'⁴⁸

The city of Moscow was devastated in 1382, and this description is given as a warning of what happens when the Russian princes cannot live in peace with one another. The punishment came in four forms: fire; sword; drowning, and captivity.⁴⁹ Moscow lay in ruins and its princes had fled. When Great Prince Dmitriy came back the corpses of the dead filled the streets. It was a sorry sight indeed, and an impressive one. The story has a moralistic and educational message and is forceful in its setting as a contrast to the victorious battle of the Kulikovo Field. Where the stories of the Kulikovo Field encouraged the Russian forces to unite in order to achieve victory, the story of Tokhtamysh's invasion did the same by setting a warning example of what would happen if fellow princes refused to cooperate with the great prince of Moscow.

The message of brotherly love between Christians and fellow Russians is especially brilliantly emphasised in the *Sophia I Chronicle*, where the heroic Dmitriy Ivanovich is presented as an ideal prince who does not want to destroy the cities of his rival Russian princes,

⁴⁷ Salmina, *Povest' o nashestvii Tokhtamysha* 1981, 558–9.

⁴⁸ *Povest' o nashestvii Tokhtamysha*, 192.

⁴⁹ *Povest' o nashestvii Tokhtamysha*, 200.

but wants to spare Christians from bloodshed.⁵⁰ The chronicle account of the war against the pagan Khan Mamai two years before the victory of the Kulikovo Field is revealing. In 1378 Dmitriy confronted Mamai's troops, which were led by his commander, Begitch. The battle took place beside the River Vozha, and the great prince of Moscow fought valiantly alongside his comrades, so that the pagans had to turn and flee. The *Sophia I Chronicle* noted that the *Polovtsy* and the godless sons of Ishmael had to face the wrath of God and escape.⁵¹ The *Sophia I Chronicle* marked the culmination of the ideological message by demanding unification among the Russian forces. The tales of Kulikovo completed the message already conveyed by the historical narratives of Aleksandr Nevskiy and Dovmont of Pskov at the end of the 15th century. Dmitriy was another victorious ruler, on a par with them, being morally correct as he fought in order to protect his fellow Christians.

Lur'e pointed out, in his discussion of the chronicle edition alleged to be the source of the *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles, the idea of uniting the Russian lands in order to resist external enemies as the key theme, and it was to this end that the old warning against fraternal rivalry was highlighted.⁵² This emerges especially clearly in the last and most elaborate narrative of the Kulikovo cycle, the *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* (*Skazanie o Mamaevom poboiishche*). It is a culmination of the Kulikovo cycle in every respect, placing the heroic deeds of Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich in a far-reaching, universal setting. The *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* is in every way the highlight of the Kulikovo cycle. It is the most popular, the most detailed, and has an excellently created, harmonious narrative. It presents a great story, emotional and patriotic, romantic and heroic. Prince Dmitriy is seen as a human being with fears and doubts of his own, but also with courage and faith. It is also one of the prime examples of the new 'word-weaving style', sometimes termed the Second South Slavic style, which formed the literary language from the end of the 14th century onwards.

The dating of the *Tale* is far from certain. It has survived in eight editions and over 50 manuscripts from the 16th and 17th centuries. Its chronicle edition was attached to the chronicle of Vologda-Perm

⁵⁰ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 234.

⁵¹ *Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis'*, 237.

⁵² Lur'e 1976, 110–11. See Danilevskiy 2000, 289.

either at the end of the 15th century or at the beginning of the 16th, which gives us an earliest known date for its existence. Some scholars estimate that this chronicle edition was reworked on the basis of a preceding one (*Osnovnaya redaktsiya*), but since the Vologda-Perm chronicle contains the oldest extant text of the tale, no definitive answers to questions of its origin can be offered. Dmitriev argues that this story arose at the beginning of the 15th century, in all likelihood as a sequel to the disastrous onslaught by Khan Ögedei in Russia in 1408. After this defeat the uniting of the Russian forces under the leadership of the great prince gained more and more weight, as the internal feuds and rivalries among the princes were quoted as the main reason for the failure of the Russian defence.⁵³ David B. Miller argues that the *Tale* appeared in the 1490s at the earliest, but most likely in the early 1500s, since it fits together perfectly with the conscious promotion of the cult of Sergey of Radonezh by the Moscow ruling family at the beginning of the 16th century.⁵⁴

The *Tale* is the most extensive of the Kulikovo cycle stories, and gives the fullest account of the battle. It has many elements in its plot that are similar to those in the expanded chronicle account, which could mean either that the composer of the tale used the chronicle version as his source, or that both the *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* and the expanded chronicle account used the same sources. The peculiarity of the *Tale* lies, however, in the fact that it contains various details that are not known from other sources. The text also seems to have many mistakes in its content, e.g. the fact that Mamai's Lithuanian ally is named as Olgerd (Algirdas), although in reality it was Olgerd's son Jagailo (Jagiello). Olgerd had died three years before the battle of Kulikovo, but since he had waged wars against the Russian princes before, his fame was better established as a frightening enemy than that of his son, Jagailo, who was actually duke of Lithuania at the time of the battle. In addition, Metropolitan Kiprian is said to have blessed Dmitriy before the battle, although he was actually in Kiev at the time of the battle in 1380. These errors are not necessarily slapdash mistakes, however, but more probably intentional additions to the plot, aimed at giving it a deeper message.⁵⁵

⁵³ Dmitriev, *Skazanie* 1981, 552; Dmitriev 1989.

⁵⁴ Miller 1993, 693.

⁵⁵ Dmitriev, *Skazanie* 1981, 552–3. Cf. Dmitriev & Lur'e & Tvorogov 1970, 297.

The *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* is the most interesting part of the Kulikovo cycle as far as any comparison of its content with that of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* is concerned. It also introduces themes of its own into the narrative, by which its author demonstrated his fondness for the notion of the important eschatological role of Orthodox Russia in its holy war against Islam. In uniting the themes of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* with that of a religious sense of history, the tale makes a significant contribution to Russian medieval historical consciousness.

The author of the *Tale* displays a consciousness of world history and its biblical roots when he writes that he wants to tell of a battle that took place a little while ago, in which the Christians under the Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich fought with the pagan Mamai and the godless descendants of Hagar beside the River Don. The important message of the story is revealed by relating how God elevated the Christians and beat down the pagans, just as in ancient times he had helped Gideon against the Midianites:

I want to tell you, brothers, about the battle fought a while ago, how the Great Prince Dmitriy and the whole Orthodox host went to war against the pagan Mamai and the godless descendants of Hagar. God elevated the Christian tribes and lowered the pagans, heaping disgrace on them in their savageness, just as in ancient times he helped Gideon against the Midianites, and Moses against the pharaoh.⁵⁶

This reference to the biblical hero Gideon is most engrossing, and the later description of the battle of the Kulikovo Field is sketched in accordance with Gideon's campaign against the Midianites in the Bible. Here apocalyptic visions of history are once again present—as in the chronicle account of the battle of Kalka—in that the Mongols are likened to Gideon's opponents. This clearly has a hidden message. It is said in the Bible that when the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, he gave them into the hands of the Midianites and other eastern peoples, who came up with a multitude of people and ravaged their lands.⁵⁷

Thus Great Prince Dmitriy's opponent is likened to the eastern tribes who came as punishment from God, and imposed a cruel penalty on the people who had done wrong in the sight of their

⁵⁶ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 132.

⁵⁷ Judges 6:1–5.

Lord. As Israel found its liberator in the valiant warrior Gideon, so Dmitriy too is seen in the tale as the liberator of God's people from the pagan eastern tribes. The *Tale* goes on to proclaim that God wanted to punish the Israelites for their sins, but this punishment was not intended to be forever, because 'God's wrath does not last endlessly nor does he punish for ever'.⁵⁸ It is in this that the *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* reaches a universal level in its narrative, a solemn and firm concept of Russia's role in world history. The application of Israel's role to the history of Moscow was definitely a well-balanced feature, which attached an in-depth eschatological significance to Dmitriy's battle when the *Tale* claimed that the time of punishment was over after the victory.

The *Tale* begins with a description of how a prince of the eastern land, the 'pagan idol-worshipper' Mamai, was tempted by the devil to threaten the Christians and their churches. The story is connected to the historical setting of the period of Prince Aleksandr Nevskiy when it refers to the Mongol conquest that took place at that time; Mamai yearns for the glorious days of Khan Baty, who had conquered all the Russian lands:

This godless Mamai became haughty, and started to envy another Julian apostate, Khan Baty, and began to inquire of the elderly Tatars how Baty had managed to subjugate the Russian lands.⁵⁹

Baty is here likened to the Roman emperor Flavius Claudius Julianus (ruled 361–3), who revived the old pagan cults and persecuted the Christians. The tendency to point out paganism in an enemy is fully comparable with the spirit of the French *Song of Roland* (*La Chanson de Roland*, c. 1100), which also accented the paganism of the Muslim enemy. The *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* actually parallels the *Song of Roland* in many ways, the most characteristic feature that they have in common being a lavishly manifested crusading fervour. In contrast to the purity of the Christian religion, the enemies are not only Muslims but, worse still, idol worshippers and 'pagans'.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 134.

⁵⁹ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 132.

⁶⁰ The *Song of Roland*, first section, lines 1–511 and sixth section, lines 2570–2973. The *Song of Roland* is the oldest surviving French poem, and also the oldest and greatest of the *chansons de geste*, medieval epic poems written in French. Although neither the identity of its composer nor the date of its composition is known, most scholars estimate that the poem was written in 1098–1100. This places its origins in the era of the First Crusade, and thus the poem has sometimes been characterised

The crusader theme is combined with the task of uniting the forces of the Russian princes against a mutual enemy of the faith. Here, just as Roland's own step-father, Ganelon, was the man who betrayed the Franks,⁶¹ a traitor can also be found among the Christians in the *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai*. The *Tale* begins with the description of the enemy allies, of how the Lithuanian Prince Olgerd, Prince Oleg of Ryazan and Mamai combine their forces and plan to go after Dmitriy Ivanovich. The fellow Russian, Oleg of Ryazan, is depicted as the main conspirator, the new Svyatopolk. When Great Prince Dmitriy hears rumours about this coalition against him he becomes very sad and laments that his friends have turned against him. The pureness and honesty of Dmitriy's heart is thoroughly investigated by Metropolitan Kiprian, and Dmitriy declares that his own attitude towards Olgerd and Oleg has always been honest and frank.⁶² His moral superiority is thus shown by highlighting his deprecation of the brotherly envy which has led to civil strife among the Russian princes.

The support of the clergy and the endorsement of the Orthodox Church enjoyed by Prince Dmitriy had already been brought up in the expanded chronicle account, but the *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* highlights further a message of a war conducted by the Orthodox Church against the 'heathen' Muslims. Dmitriy's relationship with the pious Sergey of Radonezh is depicted in more detail when he enters the Monastery of the Holy Trinity to meet the monk and receive his blessing. Sergey blesses Prince Dmitriy and his army with holy water, and makes the sign of the cross on Dmitriy's forehead. The *Militia Christi* idea is fully revealed in Dmitriy's request to have two monks from the monastery, the famous warrior-monks Aleksandr Peresvet and Andrey Osl'yablya, among his troops. Sergey fulfils this request as he arms his fighting monks with heavenly weapons, crosses embroidered on their robes. He then gives his blessing to Dmitriy and his troops, who are soon going to confront a pagan enemy and fight on behalf of Orthodox Christianity.⁶³

as propaganda aimed at encouraging Christians to take up arms against Islam. It is animated by the spirit of the crusades at a time when the medieval Catholic Church, at the height of its power, sought to expand Christendom into the Holy Land. Burgess 1990.

⁶¹ The *Song of Roland*, first section, lines 1–511 and eighth section, lines 3675–4002.

⁶² *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 142.

⁶³ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 146.

Again the crusader themes similar to the *Song of Roland* are found in the *Tale*, which not only repeats the main motifs of treachery among the Christians and friendship between the main heroes (Dmitriy and his 'brother' Vladimir Andreyevich, likened to Roland and Oliver), but also the image of a warrior monk, as Archbishop Turpin was one of the most gallant heroes among Roland's troops. Archbishop Turpin can be considered as the perfect embodiment of a holy man and a warrior in the age of the crusades, the new metaphor of a warlike Church that will lead the battle against Islam. While Archbishop Turpin's militant image reflects the new direction the Church had taken since Pope Urban's speech at the council of Clermont in 1095, it is obvious that Dmitriy's warrior monks in the *Tale* have the same mission. However, the *Song of Roland* and the *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai*—two very similar works with motifs of Christian warfare—are separated by a time interval of approximately 400 years, as most scholars estimate the date of composition of the *Song of Roland* to be somewhere around 1100, the time of the First Crusade, while the story of Dmitriy's crusade originated considerably later. But the message of God's forces on earth was not too old to be adapted to conditions in late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Russia. The universal Christian theme was timeless. Instead of the Franks, this time it was the duty of the Orthodox Russians to be the agents of God, carrying out God's will on earth.

After *igumen* Sergey had given Dmitriy and his host his blessing, the great prince returned to Moscow and began his spiritual preparation for the challenge that lay ahead. He is depicted as praying in front of a miracle-working icon painted by the Apostle Luke.⁶⁴ This is another of the mistakes made possibly on purpose in the *Tale*, for this icon was brought from the city of Vladimir to Moscow only 15 years after the battle of the Kulikovo Field, in 1395, when the city was threatened by the Mongol khan Tamerlane, and it was believed in the later tradition that it was because of the icon's influence that Tamerlane eventually turned back and did not storm the city.⁶⁵ The cult of the Mother of God was closely associated with the Kulikovo victory, however, and not only because the battle took place on 8 September, the day of the Nativity of the Mother of God, one of the greatest feasts of the Orthodox Church. The Russian

⁶⁴ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 148.

⁶⁵ See Crummey 1987, 64.

troops were going into battle to fight for the Mother of God and the living cross, and Prince Dmitriy spoke thus to his soldiers in the expanded chronicle account: 'Brothers, the time has come for us to fight, and the feast of Mary has just begun . . .'⁶⁶

Strengthening the emphasis of the religious theme in the *Tale*, Dmitriy also visited the tomb of the miracle-working Metropolitan Peter, who had held the office from 1305–26. He was canonised soon after his death and became the patron saint of the rapidly growing city of Moscow. It was first and foremost the saints recognised as protectors of Moscow to whom the requests for heavenly assistance were directed. As Metropolitan Kiprian blessed the troops, the men gathered in the church of the Archangel Michael, took their touching farewells and gave tender goodbye kisses to their ladies. Prince Dmitriy consoled his wife, the Great Princess Eudokia, saying: 'If God is with us, who can resist us?' This affectionate farewell scene continues with the poetic description of the valiant Russian troops on their way like falcons to meet the enemy, taken from the *Žadonshchina*. After that the sorrow of the women of Moscow is depicted in their mourning, and Princess Eudokia is described as praying that the father of her sons will come back home alive.⁶⁷

As Dmitriy's troops entered the city of Kolomna, he addressed his 'brother', or comrade-in-arms, Vladimir Andreyevich, pointing out how near they were to death, and that if they should face it, the eternal life of heaven would lie ahead for them. Then he called on his ancestors, the martyrs Boris and Gleb, for help.⁶⁸ In the meantime, the deceitful Prince Oleg of Ryazan was frightened by rumours that the pious Sergey had blessed Dmitriy, and withdrew from the forthcoming battle. He felt qualms of conscience at having allied himself with the dishonourable pagan khan, and admitted that the Lithuanian Olgerd had also been a fool to do so, although his own mistake had been even greater, because as an Orthodox prince he was aware of the true commandments of the Lord, as opposed to Olgerd, who confessed only the Latin faith. After hearing of Oleg's disengagement, the Lithuanian prince also regretted that he had listened to the talk of the traitorous prince of Ryazan in the first place, and withdrew himself from the battle.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *Letopisnaya povest' o Kulikovskoy bitve*, 120.

⁶⁷ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 152.

⁶⁸ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 154.

⁶⁹ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 156.

The *Tale* has a strong message on the uniting of all Christians, demonstrated by the glorious Christian Lithuanian heroes, to whom great credit is given alongside Dmitriy's troops. It is related that Olgerd of Lithuania had two sons, Andrey of Polotsk and Dmitriy of Bryansk, who, unlike their father, were good Christians. In a letter, Andrey urged his brother Dmitriy to join the battle on the Christian side, justifying the idea of sons fighting against their father by referring to the Apostle Luke and his insistence that Christians should abandon their parents and fight in the name of Christ.⁷⁰ Great Prince Dmitriy was delighted to have such heroes among his troops, and compared them to Abraham who defended his brother Lot, and to Prince Yaroslav of Kiev who took revenge for his brothers' deaths.⁷¹ Next, the scouts reported on the huge size of the enemy army, and the great prince consulted with his closest military advisors, his 'brother' Vladimir Andreyevich, and the valiant sons of Olgerd. The Lithuanian brothers stepped out and made a heartening speech, an inspiring battle exhortation in the spirit of Aleksandr Nevskiy:

If you want to have an unshakeable host, tell your men to cross the Don with not a single thought of return. Don't give a thought for the formidable power of the enemy, because God is not in power, but in truth! Prince Yaroslav beat Svyatopolk after having crossed the river, and your forefather the Great Prince Aleksandr beat the king after crossing the River Neva, and you must follow their example. If we beat the enemy, we will all be saved, but if we fall, we will confront a mutual fate in death, all of us from princes to common men. So you, my Lord the great prince, should forget death and speak words of courage, so that your troops will be encouraged and we will see what a manly host of heroes they consist of.⁷²

This battle exhortation is brilliant in its message of encouragement to the halting mind. The exhortation is not directed at the troops, but at their leader, Great Prince Dmitriy, who is still unsure whether to confront the awesome enemy or to escape the death that seems to be inevitable if they go into battle. The whole moral education contained in the story culminates in this speech by the Lithuanian brothers: 'God is not in power, but in truth', an idea that is also familiar from the *Life* of Aleksandr, urging the hero not to hesitate in entering the battle. The tone of the story is dense, enthusiastic

⁷⁰ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 158.

⁷¹ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 160.

⁷² *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 162.

and thrilling, as both of the protagonists sense the closeness and threat of death. However, the pagans cannot hope for their memories to last after their death, whereas the Christians can also rejoice in death, because of their hope of achieving the martyr's crown that pious Sergey has offered them.⁷³ All this religious tension reveals the battle of Kulikovo Field as a holy war, a crusade.

The valiant Russian troops pray for their Great Prince Dmitriy, that he will win the battle just as the Emperor Constantine once did, and just as meek David conquered the Amalekians. Not only is Aleksandr Nevskiy evoked as one of the heroic models for Dmitriy, but also his namesake Alexander the Great, the undeniable inspiration of all heroes, who is raised equal to Gideon in winning God's help on the battlefield. The Lithuanian brothers are delighted at the sight of the glorious Russian troops, and they acknowledge this:

Never before in our lifetime or after us will there be such a brave army. It is equal to the troops of Alexander of Macedonia and is comparable in its manliness to the men of Gideon, both of whom God armed with his strength.⁷⁴

Dmitriy prays before his black banner on which the image of Christ is depicted, and commands his army to stay awake and pray before the battle, which will take place the next morning. They would share a common cup on the morrow, as Dmitriy solemnly put it. The Russian camp rested in silence, but a devilish noise could be heard from the enemy camp. Like Gideon, Dmitriy stayed awake and watched over the enemy camp, and following the biblical model, one of Dmitriy's men also had an encouraging dream that night.⁷⁵ While Gideon's servant saw in his dream that the tent of the Midianites was falling (compare the collapse of the Roman king's tent in the *Life* of Aleksandr), Dmitriy's man saw the same kind of omen that gave wings to his forefather, Aleksandr, and led him to victory on the banks of the Neva, namely a vision of the martyrs Boris and Gleb riding in the sky with sharp swords in their hands. Just as Aleksandr Nevskiy had forbidden his servant Pelgusiy to tell anyone about his vision, so Dmitriy wanted to keep this vision a humble secret. Following the model given in the *Life* of Aleksandr, Dmitriy raised his hands towards heaven and burst into tears, crying:

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 164–6.

⁷⁵ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 166. Cf. Judges 7:9–13.

Dear Lord, You who love the people! Because of the prayers of the holy martyrs Boris and Gleb, help me as you helped Moses against the troops of Amalek and my forefather, the Great Prince Aleksandr against the Roman king who wanted to ravage his lands.⁷⁶

The day of the Kulikovo Field battle, 8 September, the day of the Nativity of the Mother of God, was not only one of the most celebrated Christian feasts, but the figure eight was also of significance as a symbol for eternity.⁷⁷ This can be seen in the conviction that although the Christian soldiers were confronted by inevitable death, they could be assured that their souls would live for ever, whereas the pagan Muslims would be lost for ever. The *Tale* also noted another figure of eight with symbolic significance. It had already been stated, in connection with the expanded chronicle account, that the battle on the River Don lasted for three hours, beginning at the sixth hour and lasting until the ninth, which was the time when God's heavenly host came to help the Russian troops. The battle description in the tale of the destruction of Mamai contains an incident of some significance:

And thus it was the eighth hour when a southern spirit blew into our spines, and the Volynian cried in a loud voice: 'Prince Dmitriy, our time has come, and the right moment has come!' And he added: 'My brothers, friends, fight with more courage: the holy spirit is helping us!'⁷⁸

Danilevskiy followed V. N. Rudakov's idea when explaining the 'right moment' for the Volynian hero Dmitriy Bobrok to join the battle with his detachments, as he argued that the figure eight would have had a highly symbolic significance in the mind of the author: the Holy Spirit began to help the Russian forces at the eighth hour of the day on Sunday 8 September in the year 6888, which was the year 1380 according to the traditional Byzantine Church calendar.⁷⁹ Therefore the victory of the Kulikovo Field was not only shown in a masterful description with an intense and skilful narrative and lyrical style, but it was also given a highly symbolic spiritual significance, which underlined the importance of the presence of God and His heavenly angels on the Christian side.

⁷⁶ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 168–70.

⁷⁷ Danilevskiy 2000, 299.

⁷⁸ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 178.

⁷⁹ Rudakov 1998, 142–50; cf. Danilevskiy 2000, 299.

The *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* then proceeds with a heroic picture of Dmitriy's valour and the great moral spirit that prevailed in the Russian camp. Patriotically, it points to the gallantry of the Russian soldiers, for one Russian encountered a hundred pagans. Mamai was forced to flee, and the Russians gained victory with the help of the saints Boris and Gleb. After the enemy's escape the battlefield was in the hands of Dmitriy's warriors, who began to seek out their leaders and count their dead. After a search, Great Prince Dmitriy was found wounded, leaning against a tree, and his men hailed him:

Rejoice O Prince, the equal of the ancient Yaroslav, the new Aleksandr, conqueror of the enemy!⁸⁰

In his humble and stern way Dmitriy countered the flattering compliments and reminded his men that the victory was gained because of the mercy of Our Lord and His Immaculate Mother and the prayers of Dmitriy's ancestors Boris and Gleb, St Peter of Moscow and their helper *igumen* Sergey.⁸¹

A difference can be distinguished between the saints who Dmitriy himself thought were their heavenly helpers, and the warrior princes to whom Dmitriy's men were willing to compare their prince. The position of Prince Yaroslav as a great warlord was somewhat connected with the cult of the martyrs Boris and Gleb, because he was the prince who took revenge for his deceased brothers. Therefore Yaroslav's victory over fraternal strife had come to mean a victory for good over the infamous fratricide, 'the cursed Svyatopolk'. The naming of Dmitriy as the 'new Aleksandr' is a somewhat obscure reference; we do not know which Aleksandr is being referred to, Alexander of Macedonia or Aleksandr Nevskiy, since both comparisons had been made earlier. Since the first of the princes, Yaroslav, was Russian, one could assume that Dmitriy's men were referring to two valiant Russian princes that they knew of, and a reference to Aleksandr Nevskiy in this case would mean that his fame as an ideal warrior prince was well established by the time the tale was written.

Aleksandr Nevskiy and Gideon, who confronted the eastern tribes, can thus be seen as the most important allegories for Dmitriy's war-

⁸⁰ *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*, 182.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

rior image. In this connection it must be asked what the ideological purpose of Aleksandr's victory was. His battle at the Neva was an allegory of Hezekiah's battle against Assyria at the time when Israel was conquered, and only Judah was left safe because of God's intervention. If we consider Aleksandr Nevskiy as an allegory for Hezekiah, it must mean that the northern principalities of the Russian lands, and especially Novgorod, were regarded in the *Life* of Aleksandr as safe under Aleksandr's leadership, although Khan Baty had conquered the southern principalities.

Against this background, Dmitriy's battle was an act that restored freedom to the people once enslaved by Baty, who had suffered for a long time under the pressure of an alien conqueror. This is what the opening words of the *Tale* hinted at by saying that God did not want to punish His people for ever. Obviously the time of liberation had come. Gideon confronted the eastern nomadic tribes, and the enemies by the River Don were the same as the Midianites, who 'came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts'.⁸² It was demonstrated through miracles and visions that the sword of the Lord was with Dmitriy as it had been with Gideon, just as the Mongols and the Midianites both belonged to the same eastern tribe, the descendants of Hagar.

The late *Pskov I Chronicle* clarifies the interpretation of the images of hope contained in the heroic presentations of the champions of the battles at the Don and the Neva. A passage in the Obolenskiy manuscript⁸³ from the end of the 17th century recalls 'about the unhappy event and conquest that God sent to Great Russia to punish us for our sins, . . . and about the internal feuds and the conquests of the descendants of Hagar and the Latins.'⁸⁴ Here the events that took place in the Russian lands are related to the universal history of Christendom, for the same also happened in Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch and Constantinople—the City of the Emperor—all of which fell because of internal feuds and attacks from the east:

When Baty conquered the land of Russia in ancient times, a hope of liberation survived, as was the case among the Israelites, because there

⁸² Judges 6:5.

⁸³ The last date of the Obolenskiy manuscript is 1636, and according to a paleographic analysis it is suspected that it was written soon after that date. Nasonov 1941, xvi–xvii.

⁸⁴ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 122.

still existed in Great Russia the cradle of the princes, the mother of all cities, the great Novgorod with all its northern lands. As the Prophet Jeremiah wept for the land of Judah, so the people wept in Russia.⁸⁵

Next follows a moving lament for the devastated land of Russia which has suffered so much, but a harmonious interpretation of the events of world history is presented here which combines it in a deep and refined way with the history of Russia and emphasises the great role of Novgorod. Aleksandr Nevskiy's efforts have the same biblical meaning here as that attributed to Dmitriy Donskoy's battle against Mamai in the *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai*.

At the same time as Aleksandr's image in the chronicles underwent decisive changes towards that of a self-sacrificing prince, another heroic story was born. The protagonist of the new narrative was presented as the second Aleksandr, acting according to the model of his image in wars and in government. The concepts of both the eschatological understanding of Christian history and the image of the ideal warrior prince are united harmoniously in the narratives of the Kulikovo cycle. No other single historical event has shaped the Russians' consciousness of their history more or made such an everlasting imprint on patriotic feeling as Dmitriy Donskoy's victory in the battle of the Kulikovo Field in 1380. This has been set up as one of the major landmarks in the history of Russia. While Aleksandr Nevskiy's image was transformed to conform to the self-sacrificing model of Mikhail of Chernigov in the Second Edition of the *Life*, the hero of this new legend did not have to humiliate himself in front of the Mongol khans of the Golden Horde.

The *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai* paralleled the war scenes of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, and in doing so unavoidably reworked and reshaped the image of Aleksandr, introducing cultic connections which have baffled numerous historians. If Aleksandr's military example formed a model for Dmitriy's victory at Kulikovo, there was one further text in the Kulikovo cycle that made use of the general presentation of the *Life* of Aleksandr to establish a close formal parallel between these two heroes.

⁸⁵ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 122.

3.3. *Moscow's triumph over the eastern people*

The *Life of Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich*—the full-length title being the ‘Story of the life and death of the Russian tsar, Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich’—belongs to the genre of necrologies of deceased princes. It found its way into the chronicles from the 15th century onwards and was first given in the year of Dmitriy’s death, 1389, being included initially in the *Sophia I*, *Novgorod IV* and *Karamzin* chronicles. It is highly political in character, because it underlines Dmitriy’s will, dictated on his deathbed, which left his oldest son as heir to the princely throne. It has therefore been suggested that the *Life* was first created during the dispute among Dmitriy’s grandsons over the succession between the 1430s and 1450s.⁸⁶ The author’s main task is to exalt Great Prince Dmitriy and his role as a ruler. He even endows Dmitriy with the title of ‘tsar’, actually assumed by the Muscovite dynasty only some 180 years after Dmitriy’s death. It is thus obvious that, primarily, the story had the political and propagandistic purpose of enhancing the role of Moscow’s ruler as a unifying power in Russia.⁸⁷

The *Life* of Dmitriy follows the structure of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* quite closely. According to the demands of the hagiographic style, Dmitriy’s parents are first presented, then his humble and pious character is described and, after that, according to the model set by the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, an account is given of how the prince became famous and how his fame spread to every neighbouring country. Just as the Roman king in Aleksandr’s *Life* became bitter and jealous, so Khan Mamai hears of Dmitriy’s reputation, becomes embittered, and wants to conquer his lands. This causes Mamai to send a detachment to fight a battle with the great prince of Moscow beside the River Vozha.⁸⁸ The *Life* of Dmitriy thus used the narrative of the *Life* of Aleksandr quite freely, caring little about the actual historical facts. The real background to the events was much more complicated. In 1378 Khan Mamai sent one of his army commanders, Begitch, to Russia, and the great prince of Moscow confronted him by the River Vozha in the Land of Ryazan. After a few days of waiting, the Mongol army began the attack, crossing the river on

⁸⁶ Salmina, *Slovo o zhitii* 1981, 560–1.

⁸⁷ Zenkovsky 1974, 315–16.

⁸⁸ *Slovo o zhitii velikogo knyazya Dmitrya Ivanovicha*, 208–28.

11 August, but the Russian troops won the day, beating the Mongol army for the first time.⁸⁹

As in the *Life* of Aleksandr, the battles in the *Life* of Dmitriy also come in pairs. The first encounter at the River Vozha, compared to the battle of the Neva, is followed by another—the battle of Kulikovo—which takes as its example Aleksandr's second battle, on Lake Peypus. Dmitriy's men swear their allegiance to their commander before the battle of Kulikovo just as Aleksandr's men did before the battle of Lake Peypus. Dmitriy is compared to Abraham and Yaroslav, and he prays to the heavenly protector of Moscow, St Metropolitan Peter. When the battle takes place, a heavenly host of angels is seen in the sky, just as during Aleksandr's battle on the ice. Victory is sealed by the participation of SS Boris and Gleb, and the events are likened to the Israelites' victory over the forces of Amalek—exactly the same comparison as Aleksandr used when praying before the battle on Lake Peypus.⁹⁰ The *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* served more closely as a model for Dmitriy's *Life* than for any of the other stories in the Kulikovo cycle, which is very logical, as both presented princely lives through hagiographic conventions, while both princes were shown as ideal embodiments of military valour.

After the battle descriptions, however, the *Life* of Dmitriy reveals its most original feature in the sentimental gathering of the family around the dying great prince. The central point is the announcement of Dmitriy's will, as the great prince divides his family possessions among his sons, and the oldest son, Vasiliy, is to succeed him as great prince.⁹¹ This point is of the greatest value, because traditionally the throne was accessible to all members of the ruling family, including brothers of the deceased grand prince and their sons, and the successor was eventually sanctioned by the khan of the Golden Horde.

The *Life of Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich* took its main structure from the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, although it contained a more subtle mixture of the components of epic military valour and religious rhetoric than the *Life* of Aleksandr. However, the emotional and rhetorical style of the *Life* of Dmitriy has also been criticised. Fennell argued that while the *Life* of Aleksandr preserved the balance between the

⁸⁹ See Tvorogov 1994, 69.

⁹⁰ *Slovo o zhitii velikogo knyazya Dmitrya Ivanovicha*, 210–12.

⁹¹ *Slovo o zhitii velikogo knyazya Dmitrya Ivanovicha*, 216.

'factual' and the 'conventional', the *Life* of Dmitriy contained military episodes that were 'swamped by eulogies and laments'.⁹² Harvey Goldblatt rightfully criticised Fennell for his lack of respect for artistic expression or ideological vigour.⁹³ In Norman Ingham's opinion the epic rhetoric in Aleksandr's *Life* confronts the religious rhetoric in a clumsy manner, while in the *Life* of Dmitriy this occurs in a more elaborate manner,⁹⁴ and this indeed seems to be the case, as the literary style develops in expressing the emotional tensions of the plotline and in the colouring of the characters.

Thus Dmitriy Ivanovich, the great prince of Moscow, was made a second Aleksandr Nevskiy in the literature of the Kulikovo cycle. It has often been argued that it was during the rule of Dmitriy himself that the military cult of Aleksandr Nevskiy was strengthened. It is regularly suggested that the cult of Aleksandr gained official status after the battle of the Kulikovo Field, when Metropolitan Kiprian opened his tomb in 1380 or 1381 because of the miracle seen at the battle. After that the relics were deposited in an open coffin, and a cult of honouring them was thus established, to be reasserted by the Church in Vladimir.⁹⁵ This is questionable, however, because the narratives telling of the miracle cannot be dated to the time when the battle of Kulikovo actually took place, and the information about the miracle is derived from a substantially later source, the sixteenth-century edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr, *Slovo Pokhval'noe*, written at the instigation of Metropolitan Makariy on the occasion of Aleksandr Nevskiy's official canonisation in 1547, when miracles were required and added to his *Life*. This edition is more thoroughly examined in Part Three of this study.

There is actually no textual evidence to suggest that either Great Prince Dmitriy or Metropolitan Kiprian had anything to do with the alleged cult of Aleksandr; quite the opposite. Even the tale of the destruction of Mamai has no references to a 'holy' Aleksandr Nevskiy, although his *Life* was one of the most important models for its narrative. The only Russian princes regarded as saints among the heavenly host who came to Dmitriy's help were SS Boris and Gleb.

⁹² Fennell & Stokes 1974, 133.

⁹³ Goldblatt 1997, 89.

⁹⁴ Ingham 1997, 176.

⁹⁵ Begunov, *Ikonografiya* 1995, 172; Klepinin 1993, 96–7; Khoroshev 1986, 124; Golubinskiy 1903, 65.

The answer is as simple as it appears. There was no 'St' Aleksandr in the heavenly host, because he was not regarded as such at the time when the tale was written. If there had been any hint of a real cult of Aleksandr, the author would surely have mentioned him in connection with the miracle on the Don. Since such a miracle was reported only in the latter half of the 16th century, we must conclude that the time was not yet ripe to present Aleksandr Nevskiy as a true saint when the *Life* of Dmitriy was written in the first half of the 15th century.

If the *Life of Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich* presented the pious image of a ruler more brilliantly than the somewhat stiff *Life* of Aleksandr had, was this also intended for cult purposes? The religious atmosphere had altered since the days of the early rulers of Kiev and Vladimir. From the reign of Aleksandr Nevskiy's son Daniil until well into the 15th century, none of the great princes of Moscow were canonised. Dmitriy Ivanovich himself was officially canonised only in 1988. As Lenhoff so adequately put it, the period of Moscow's growth was an era of religious movements carried out by monks and ascetics, rather than an era of dynastic saints. On the other hand, deceased great princes, although not recognised as true saints, continued to be venerated unofficially by the reigning autocrats and influential members of the elite.⁹⁶

Beginning with Aleksandr Nevskiy and his sons, all of the Daniilovichs who were not murdered became monks on their deathbeds, the only exceptions being Dmitriy Donskoy and his brother. Lenhoff suggests that this was one of the main reasons why Dmitriy couldn't be canonised, even though his *Life* presented him as pious prince and used hagiographic conventions. On the other hand, Lenhoff notes that Dmitriy was not on very good terms with Metropolitan Kiprian.⁹⁷ Even though members of the Daniilovich dynasty were venerated by the later great princes, and even depicted as holy ancestors of Tsar Ivan IV in frescoes in the Cathedral of the Archangel in the Moscow Kremlin, they were not officially canonised by the Orthodox Church, the only exception being Aleksandr Nevskiy. Obviously the Orthodox Church of Russia cannot be looked at merely as a stooge of the Muscovite rulers, a fact that historians often seem to underestimate.

⁹⁶ Lenhoff 1997, 391–2.

⁹⁷ Lenhoff 1997, 407–8.

However, the princes of Moscow knew how to make use of the pious reputation of their forefathers, even if they had not been officially canonised by the Church. The *Life of Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich* was most probably used by his descendants. Vasiliy II, Dmitriy's grandson, for example, asserted his authority only after family strife, and it has been argued that the *Life* of Dmitriy was written only in 1447, to back up Vasiliy's claims to power. Once the story had been created, of course, it was available for the use of every ruler belonging to the dynasty thereafter.⁹⁸ The *Life of Great Prince Dmitriy* was included in the *Book of Degrees* of the tsars of Moscow during the 16th century, and this imposed an even more elaborate pattern on the *Life* of Dmitriy. It is obvious that the *Life* was important for the claims of rightful inheritance put forward by later rulers of Moscow.

It was not only the authority of the great prince of Moscow which was highlighted in the stories of the Kulikovo cycle, but also his spiritual and religious leadership. A central position in the cycle is occupied by Sergey of Radonezh, founder of the famous Monastery of the Holy Trinity, 71km north of Moscow, and one of the leading personalities in Russian religious life at that time. Sergey was born in Rostov in 1314, became a monk in 1334, and was known as an ascetic who practised meditative prayer in the forests. The small monastic chapel which he dedicated to the Holy Trinity later grew into a leading religious centre in Russia, and his disciples spread the Hesychast spiritual movement throughout northern Russia by founding new monasteries there. In his survey of the development of the cult of St Sergey, David B. Miller notes that Sergey was already revered during his lifetime, first and foremost by the clergy, and that they and succeeding generations of monks created a wave of monastic foundations to perpetuate the coenobitic rule that Sergey had initiated in Muscovite Russia. Metropolitan Aleksey and Patriarch Philotheus of Constantinople used Sergey's reputation for ascetic zeal and moral rectitude as a fitting example with which to introduce coenobitic rule into the monastic culture of Moscow. Princes and nobles honoured and rewarded Sergey and his monastery with land and other treasures, sought his presence, advice and blessing, and funded monasteries for his disciples, as did Great Prince Dmitriy

⁹⁸ Lenhoff 1997, 415.

Ivanovich. Sergey was also closely involved in Dmitriy's family affairs, including the baptisms of his sons, and in his funeral.⁹⁹

The official cult of St Sergey was established by 1422, during the reign of Dmitriy's son, Vasiliy I. Epiphanius the Wise, who died in the Monastery of the Holy Trinity some time between 1418 and 1422, wrote Sergey's *Life*, which has not survived, but it was rewritten about a decade later by Pakhomi the Serb.¹⁰⁰ Miller suggests that it was in the new editions of Sergey's *Life*, written by Pakhomi no earlier than the 1430s, that the stories of Dmitriy asking Sergey's blessing on his battle endeavours at Kulikovo were included.¹⁰¹ Although many historians are convinced that the scene in the Kulikovo cycle in which Dmitriy receives Sergey's blessing before going into battle reflects an actual historical event, there are good grounds for Miller's arguments that this episode belongs to the invented traditions that surfaced only around 1448. The great prince of Moscow, Vasiliy II, began the process of transforming the private relationship between the Monastery of the Holy Trinity and Moscow's ruling family into a public one from 1447 onwards, as he needed the charisma of the monastery to legitimise the father-to-son succession.¹⁰² During the early 16th century it was already common to make official pilgrimages to Sergey's monastery, and the great princes eagerly sponsored or refined legends to explain their connections with it. These were the final steps which transformed Sergey's cult into a national tradition linked to Moscow's ruling house.¹⁰³

The reign of Dmitriy Ivanovich's son, Vasiliy I (1389–1425), was a time of deep internal crisis in the Golden Horde, which offered an opportunity for Lithuania to exercise a growing influence. In 1386 Jagailo (Jagiello) of Lithuania married the heiress to the Polish throne, creating a dynastic union between the two countries. Before long, local resistance within Lithuania took shape around Vitovt (Vytautas), Jagailo's ambitious cousin, and in 1392, Jagailo was forced to recognise Vitovt as his co-ruler in Lithuania. In practice Vitovt acted as a fully independent ruler, pursuing his own aggressive foreign policy. At the height of his power, he formed an alliance with Moscow,

⁹⁹ Miller 1993, 684.

¹⁰⁰ Bulanin 1981, 270–1.

¹⁰¹ Miller 1993, 692–3.

¹⁰² Miller 1993, 683–8.

¹⁰³ Miller 1993, 699.

and eventually challenged the Golden Horde for control of the steppe areas north of the Black Sea. Young Vasilii I posed no threat to his ambitions, and assumed the role of Vitovt's client and junior partner. The relationship between the dynasties of Moscow and Lithuania had already become established during Dmitriy Donskoy's lifetime, when he placed his son Vasilii under the protection of the Lithuanian duke. In 1391 Vasilii married Vitovt's daughter, Sophia, which established the firm ties of kinship on which Vasilii leaned for support from his father-in-law in moments of crisis throughout the rest of his career.¹⁰⁴

The warm relationship between the ruling houses of Moscow and Lithuania was also reflected in the chronicles. According to Likhachev, the ideological message of the chronicle edition of 1408, as presented in the *Trinity Chronicle*, is that the arch-enemy of Russia is not Lithuania, which belonged to the same Orthodox metropolitanate in Kiprian's time, but the godless Mongols of the steppes, descendants of Hagar and Ishmael, who were seen as the ideological enemy, alien to Christians.¹⁰⁵ This idea is put forward especially forcefully in the last pages of the *Trinity Chronicle*, in the *Tale of the Conquest of Edigey* (*Skazanie o nashestvii Edigeya*) of 1408.¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately this tale has survived only in fragments in Karamzin's notes, while the *Simeonov Chronicle* contains a somewhat embellished version of it, rewritten in Tver around 1413.¹⁰⁷ In its ideological content the *Tale* exhorted Russian lands to unite when confronting the enemy from the steppes. Its partner in this process of unification against the Horde was to be Lithuania. We should bear in mind that several other stories describing the struggle against the Mongols explicitly depicted Lithuanian heroes defending Moscow, as in the case of the battle of the Kulikovo Field in the tale of the destruction of Mamai.

The *Tale of the Conquest of Edigey* in 1408 as presented in the *Simeonov Chronicle* clearly comes from the pen of a man who was well equipped in the art of writing. It begins with a description of the wickedness of the Mongols, who are colourfully depicted as bloodthirsty wolves who, at the instigation of their father, Satan, lure the Russian princes into internecine strife with their false promises, smooth talk and

¹⁰⁴ Crummey 1987, 62.

¹⁰⁵ Likhachev, *Russkie letopisi* 1947, 296–9.

¹⁰⁶ *Troitskaya letopis'*, 468–71.

¹⁰⁷ Droblenkova 1981, 568.

precious gifts.¹⁰⁸ The *Tale* gives great credit to the wise old men, who are depicted throughout the story as making witty comments. The narrative begins with a description of a confrontation between Great Prince Vasiliy I and his father-in-law Vitovt of Lithuania, which took place during the years 1406–8, when the strained relationship between Vasiliy of Moscow and the ambitious Vitovt flared into open conflict. The crisis was soon calmed, and after Vasiliy I's death in 1425, one of his sons was educated at the court of Vitovt.¹⁰⁹ The old men express their deepest resentment at the Mongol assistance which Vasiliy had accepted, and the mistake made by the Russians in allowing Mongol troops to join with Vasiliy's forces in a war against Lithuania. This mistake is reflected in the fraternal feuds of the Kievan period, when the armies of the *Polovtsy* interfered in the internal feuds of the Rurikid princes, inflicting great damage on Russia by spying on its army.¹¹⁰

Another cause of the older men's resentment was Vasiliy's later action in rewarding his Lithuanian ally Svidrigailo by presenting him with the famous city of Vladimir, together with its church and miracle-working icon:

This the old men could not accept, and they said: 'Could it be right, a thing that has never happened in our days and was never heard of in ancient times, that a city like that could be given to a newcomer—a capital of the Russian lands, the glorious Vladimir, mother of all cities?'¹¹¹

Ultimately, however, Vasiliy's Lithuanian allies are seen in a less heroic light, because even the brave, dashing warrior Svidrigailo, who fought alongside Vasiliy against his own cousin, Vitovt, committed a moral failure by refusing to visit the church of Vladimir. The cost of this to Svidrigailo and his valiant men was the loss of their bravery as a punishment for insulting the icon, for according to the tale of the conquest of Edigey, they thus became 'weaker than women and more fearful than children'.¹¹² The old men's advice is clearly not to trust foreign help, which is ultimately deceitful, like Edigey's, or shows a lack of respect towards Russian Orthodox cus-

¹⁰⁸ *Skazanie o nashestvii Edigeya*, 244.

¹⁰⁹ See Halecki 1950, 212–25.

¹¹⁰ *Skazanie o nashestvii Edigeya*, 248.

¹¹¹ *Skazanie o nashestvii Edigeya*, 248, 250.

¹¹² *Skazanie o nashestvii Edigeya*, 250.

toms, like Svidrigailo's. Thus the *Tale of the Conquest of Edigey*, although very much directed against the infamous Mongols, is also a warning not to trust non-Orthodox allies such as the Lithuanians, who lack the spiritual capacity to respect Russian Orthodox customs.

In the delicate diplomatic network of foreign alliances, the triangular drama between Moscow, the Horde and Lithuania naturally prompted leaders to aim at the best possible position in the balance of power between the three of them. As a former enemy could soon turn out to be a present-day ally, the tales and chronicles reflect something of contemporary and later attitudes towards the participants in this game of power. Although the Lithuanian princes often formed alliances with the dynasty of Moscow, they did not command a completely positive image, even if the Lithuanian heroes in the Kulikovo cycle definitely demonstrated their merits as swift warriors. It is notable, however, that in the *Tale of the Destruction of Mamai*, the sons of Olgerd, the Lithuanian heroes Andrey and Dmitriy, were Orthodox Christians, converts, who were ready to fight against heathen relatives and even against their own father in the name of Christ. This was obviously an essential theme in the chronicle edition which was used as a source for the *Novgorod IV* and *Sophia I* chronicles, which included both the *Life* of Dovmont, a Lithuanian prince who converted to Orthodoxy, and the story of Mindaugas's converted son.

The non-converted, pagan Lithuanian warriors received a more negative treatment. The account for the year 1368 in the chronicle edition of 1408, given in the *Trinity* and *Simeonov* chronicles, tells of the campaign of Great Prince Dmitriy against Great Prince Mikhail of Tver, following which Mikhail escapes to his father-in-law, Olgerd of Lithuania. At Mikhail's request, Olgerd joins his campaign against Dmitriy of Moscow. On this occasion the chronicles portray Olgerd as a wise and cunning military leader, whose wisdom lay most of all in the fact that he did not reveal his plans or information to his foreign allies. According to the chronicles this restriction on his trust in foreign allies ensured him a prosperous reign and a great expansion of his dominions.¹¹³ Although Olgerd was presented as a wise prince, the siege that he imposed on Moscow was naturally looked on as a disaster by the chronicler, for he burned the outskirts of

¹¹³ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 108; cf. *Troitskaya letopis'*, 387.

Moscow and 'did much evil to Christians', as the chronicle reports.¹¹⁴ The wisdom of Olgerd was not seen as comparable to the wisdom of Solomon, which was so greatly appreciated in the princely eulogies of Russian princes, but was regarded more as a form of astuteness comparable to deceit and plotting.

The necrology of Olgerd, in the year of his death in 1377, gives some concluding remarks on the image of this Lithuanian ruler who played such an active part in the politics of Russia during his lifetime. The account begins: 'Grand Duke Olgerd Gediminovich of Lithuania, an infidel, godless and disgraceful, died in the year 6885'.¹¹⁵ Olgerd's virtues are presented in quite an ambiguous manner, for his undisputed achievements on the political scene are given a most peculiar explanation in the edition of 1408, as presented in the *Trinity* and *Simeonov* chronicles:

Olgerd behaved himself with great wisdom and moderation, for he did not drink beer, nor mead, nor wine or sour brew, but behaved himself with manliness and dignity, and by deceit of this kind he conquered many lands and gained himself numerous cities and principalities, thus gathering a huge dominion, the equal of which was never attained by his brothers, nor his father or grandfather.¹¹⁶

The exaltation of Olgerd's wisdom and moderation is ambiguous, so that one cannot actually say whether his behaviour is being presented in this passage as good or bad, since ultimately his wisdom and abstention from alcoholic drinks are regarded as expressions of his deceitful character.

It thus becomes obvious that one of the biggest challenges for fourteenth- to fifteenth-century Moscow was how to deal adequately with its neighbouring rivals. Most of the historical narratives concentrated on its dealings with its non-Russian neighbours, the Mongols of what was left of the scattered Golden Horde, and Lithuania, which was at the peak of its greatness. The chronicles were apt to return to the concepts of the *Primary Chronicle*, and chose to place the most elaborate historical narratives in the framework of eschatological Christian history, as modelled in the early Middle Ages by Pseudo-Methodius. Where the *Primary Chronicle* began by reporting on the coming of a tribe from the east as a punishment from God, it strongly

¹¹⁴ Ibid.; cf. *Troitskaya letopis'*, 388.

¹¹⁵ *Simeonovskaya letopis'*, 118; cf. *Troitskaya letopis'*, 402.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

appears that the literary circle modified Methodius's *Apocalypse*, proclaiming that this punishment was brought to an end by Dmitriy Donskoy's victory at the Kulikovo Field. Apparently this new eschatological vision did not arise immediately after the military conflict of 1380, however, but decades later, as the new historical consciousness developed.

The chronicles not only adopted a new concept of the end of the punishment, but also released themselves from the attitude of resignation towards the conquerors of Russia as instruments of God's wrath. As the punishment was over, new pages were turned in the old narratives of the rulers of Russia. Aleksandr Nevskiy's image underwent a process which was no doubt psychologically purifying and healing. Simultaneously, as his *Life* was adopted into the chronicles, a different narrative of it was projected in the Second Edition in the 15th century. Because of this simultaneous impact, the image of voluntary self-sacrifice was combined with that of the bold, invincible Prince Aleksandr. One could claim that this mental process had a huge impact on historical consciousness, and it must have had a psychological effect. The suffering and humiliation was acknowledged, but simultaneously the victorious war-tales offered liberation and dignity. The Moscow writers of the 15th century rediscovered the military splendour presented in the First Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr, and used it as a model for Dmitriy Ivanovich's triumphant image.

The main target of military resistance was the biblical eastern tribe, the descendants of Hagar and Ishmael. Not even the pagan Lithuanians posed such an eschatological threat, and they could always switch to the 'right' side by means of conversion, as was thoroughly pointed out in the fifteenth-century chronicles and historical tales. The eastern tribe was Moscow's real target, especially since, after the Church council of Florence, Russia alone was left to defend Orthodox Christendom.¹¹⁷ When the famous ideology of the transfer

¹¹⁷ The Church council of 1437–8 in Florence was met with much opposition in Russia. Metropolitan Isidore agreed to the union of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, but when he arrived back in Moscow he was imprisoned and had a narrow escape later. The highest clergy of Russia declared the union heretical, and in 1448 Russian Church leaders selected a new metropolitan, Iona of Ryazan, without seeking consecration from the patriarch of Constantinople. This event has later been seen as the beginning of the independence of the Church of Russia. Soon after that, in 1453, the Turks conquered Constantinople, after which Orthodox Byzantium as a political reality ceased to exist. See for example Crummey 1987, 72–3; Papadakis 1994, 396–413.

of the prestige of Rome, capital of the Christian empire, to Moscow took decisive steps forward at the end of the 15th century and was further formulated in the 16th century, its foundation was laid firmly on historical and religious concepts derived from the apocalyptic revelations in the Bible. During the reign of Ivan IV, ordained by God as tsar of Moscow, all the forefathers of the imperial genealogy of Moscow were elevated to the rank of sacred ancestors, and the military hero Aleksandr Nevskiy was especially venerated and exalted as the standard bearer of the tsar's army when it made its way to expand the Christian realm into the Muslim khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan. This is the new feature of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image which the next part of this study will approach.

PART THREE

ALEKSANDR NEVSKIY AS THE NEW
MIRACLE-WORKER OF RUSSIA

1. THE IMAGE OF ALEKSANDR NEVSKIY IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MOSCOW

1.1. *Aleksandr as a new miracle-worker for the tsars*

The development of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image was integral both to the notion of an ideal prince and to the representations of the past that were reflected in the contemporary world view. It has been observed in previous chapters how his image, although anchored in old narrative traditions, underwent constant development on the pages of the chronicles in response to the demands of the political situation, adopting the virtues which were considered ideal for Russian rulers in the 15th century, as emphasised most strikingly by the new self-sacrificial image of a prince who was devoted to the well-being of his subjects. This sacrificial image no doubt responded to the hard political situation to which the Mongol conquest had forced the Russian princes to submit, and it was developed particularly in Tver, whose great princes had often faced hardships in the Horde. As observed in the previous chapter, this sacrificial image was altered as a new literary circle developed in Moscow at the beginning of the 15th century, in order to celebrate Moscow's victories over the weakened Golden Horde. This brought forward Aleksandr's victorious image in the First Edition of his *Life* as the most important Russian model for Dmitriy Ivanovich, the great prince of Moscow, who became the greatest hero which medieval Russian literature so far had given birth to.

After the turbulent years of rivalry between Moscow and Tver for hegemony over the Russian principalities, the Mongols of the scattered Golden Horde began to loosen their grip. As time went by, notions of history changed, and the 'silence' of the Mongol conquest was passed over as the images of the conquerors altered radically, as also did those of the Russian princes. While the 14th century was a time of Mongol oppression and internal rivalry in Russia, the next century witnessed the vigorous flowering of chronicle writing and the growth and development of an ideological movement that glorified the Russian struggle against the Mongols, as epitomised in the Kulikovo cycle.

Major changes in society and government occurred in medieval Russia during the 16th century, one of the most profound, permeating all layers of society, being the growth in the governmental status of Moscow. The unification of the minor principalities under one strong great principality reached its climax in the development of the tsardom in Moscow, supported by the Russian Orthodox Church. Moscow society underwent great changes, and many social reforms were accomplished after the coronation of Ivan IV as a tsar, the autocrat of all Russia. While law codes such as the *Stoglav* united and codified the laws and practices of the Russian Orthodox Church, the *Domostroi* established order in the common life of the peasants. History was also organised and presented in perfect harmony with the current order. The great Moscow chronicles, such as the *Nikon Chronicle*, the *Voskresenskaya Chronicle* and the *Litsevoy Chronicle* were large compilations, which gave order to history and tended to describe events from the past as possessing great significance for the new narratives of Moscow's leading position as a cradle of Orthodox rule in the Christian world.¹

The development of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image in sixteenth-century Moscow must be seen in the light of this spiritual and religious development which took place at the same time as Moscow's political weight grew. The transfer of the metropolitan's seat from Vladimir to Moscow had taken place in 1326, and this was a major event which influenced the politics of Moscow's great princes. The Orthodox Church provided a sense of unity for the scattered Russian principalities, and gave inspiration to its creative artists. Monastic revival in the north was also a factor in the unifying process, particularly manifested in the figure of Sergey of Radonezh and in the position of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, which soon became a 'national shrine' to Moscow's great princes. The monastic literature of the 15th century had developed beliefs according to which Russian Christendom represented a special culminating chapter in an unbroken chain of sacred history, in which Moscow and its leaders were seen as the chosen bearers of this destiny.²

It was small wonder then, that the erudite scribes of sixteenth-century Moscow made a synthesis of their own concerning the narrations of the past, reflecting phenomena relevant to their present

¹ See Likhachev 1985, 5–8; Kloss, *Letopisniy Litsevoy svod* 1989, 30.

² Cf. Billington 1970, 48–57.

situation. This was a stage of organic development in the historical consciousness that had continued throughout on the pages of the medieval chronicles. While the realm of Moscow expanded into Siberia, foreign diplomats found their way to the court of Moscow, and the concepts of state and government underwent significant changes. A new epoch was dawning, and the period later to be called the Middle Ages was inevitably coming to an end.

Metropolitan Makariy (1481–1563), one of the most outstanding and enterprising intellectual figures in sixteenth-century Moscow, was one of the greatest architects of the well-defined recapitulation of the past and present in Russia. He is considered to have been the main architect influencing concepts of history, voiced at a highly developed ideological level during his era. However, while Makariy's literary efforts marked the culmination of the concept of Moscow's role in world history, the concept itself was fundamentally based on a medieval understanding of Christian history and the part the drama of human salvation had to play in it. Thus Metropolitan Makariy's influence on this concept, which was carefully constructed in an uninterrupted organic dialogue with the past, must not be overestimated. The dialogue between past and present was based on the historical narratives of the chronicles, which not only stored information from the past, but reflected a much wider knowledge of the world. The profound ideological claims of Moscow did not rise out of any sudden, unexpected new way of thinking, but were based on a centuries-old living tradition, which had inconspicuously interpreted the historical narratives according to the ideals of each generation which had edited the chronicles.

Since the spiritual renaissance of the early part of Ivan IV's reign was largely a result of Makariy's diligent and productive career, it is interesting to observe the basic development which took place when young Ivan IV was approaching the age of becoming a great prince of Moscow. Makariy's activity is witnessed in numerous official documents and extensive literary productions, and he had a leading role in the development of the official style of describing history in sixteenth-century Moscow. He started his career as a monk at the Pafnutii monastery at Borovsk, which was under the protection of the Moscow princes. In 1526 he was elected archbishop of Novgorod, and showed loyalty to the great princes of Moscow and to Metropolitan Daniil, those who had appointed him, asserting at the same time a stern authority over the clergy of Novgorod and Pskov. He also

demonstrated eager participation in literary production, organising the writing of the Novgorod chronicles. In 1529 he started a major collection known as the *Great Menology*, a compilation of hagiographic readings and religious texts for each month of the year. The books of the *Great Menology* were completed in 1541 and deposited in the library of the Cathedral of St Sophia in Novgorod.³

In 1542 Archbishop Makariy was elected metropolitan of Moscow and all Russia, which bound him firmly to the Moscow princely dynasty. Many great events with far-reaching consequences took place in 1547, which must be considered the culmination point of Makariy's ecclesiastical theories intended to demonstrate that universal Christian monarchy had passed to Russia. On 16 January he crowned Great Prince Ivan IV as tsar of Russia, and three weeks later he gave his blessing to Ivan's marriage to Anastasiya Yureva-Zakharina (the bride's family was better known in later generations as the Romanovs). On 26 February in the same year a Church council was summoned in Moscow which canonised 23 new Russian miracle-working saints, one of whom was Prince Aleksandr Nevskiy.⁴ Fourteen of these were canonised as all-Russian saints and nine as local saints. Aleksandr Nevskiy was the only layman among the all-Russian saints, as all the others were clerics. Local canonisation was also granted to three members of the small princely family of Murom. Two years later 16 more Russians were canonised, two of whom, Vsevolod-Gavriil of Pskov and Mikhail Yaroslavich of Tver, were of princely rank.⁵

Before the Church councils of 1547 and 1549 the actual process of Russian canonisation practice was not reported in any written sources. Respect for a saint grew up from the local preservation of relics; five saints who were widely respected across the whole Russian Church from very early on were Boris and Gleb, *igumen* Feodor of the Pechora monastery of Kiev, and metropolitans Peter and Aleksey. Later, Sergey of Radonezh and Kirill of Belozero were also acknowledged as saints for the whole Russian Orthodox Church. In addition to these, 15 saints had been raised to the rank of all-Russian saints in terms of their popularity up to the time of Makariy, includ-

³ Dmitrieva 1993, 208; Miller 1979, 269.

⁴ Golubinskiy 1903, 99–101.

⁵ Khoroshev 1986, 170–1.

ing members of the Ryurikid princely family, such as Princess Olga, Prince Vladimir, and Mikhail of Chernigov.⁶

By the middle of the 16th century, there was obviously a need to increase the number of all-Russian saints. When the council of 1547 was called in, the bishops were to present material showing the miracles and the lives of those candidates who were to be selected as saints respected by the whole Russian Church. Altogether 39 new miracle-working saints were officially canonised by the councils of 1547 and 1549. This sudden sharpening of the Russian Church's attitude towards its holy saints and their cults was a direct outcome of the emergence of the tsardom of Moscow. Once the great prince of Moscow had been elevated to the rank of tsar, ruler of a Christian empire, the Church of Russia was also elevated to first position in the ranks of Orthodox Christian churches. The glory and fame of a Church was manifested in its saints, who exhibited the spiritual beauty of the Church and helped it to achieve and maintain its important position as an intermediary in communicating the prayers of the people to God.⁷

The ideology of Muscovite tsardom, which arose in the early 16th century, was a purely monastic creation. Makariy was an ardent Josephite, and this sect formed the overwhelming majority of the Russian Church's leaders in his time. A third Church council, the *Stoglav* of 1551, codified the Josephite rules of icon painting, the holding of services, and hierarchical discipline. Joseph Sanin, founder and *igumen* of Volokolamsk monastery, was its main author, a monastic reformer who, unlike his contemporary, Nil Sorskiy, did not see any harm in monasteries possessing property and carrying out administrative duties, provided that the community respected the traditions of coenobitic monasticism in all its purity. Joseph insisted on absolute obedience, and in the last years of Ivan III's reign, he had also devoted himself to a struggle against heresy, which was to be an important issue for the Josephite monks and clerics. As the Josephite clergy had such a respected position in the eyes of Moscow's great princes, the large estates of the wealthy monasteries were not confiscated, even though the great prince desperately needed land

⁶ Golubinskiy 1903, 90–1. As there are no sources for the official canonisation process, the widely established cults have to be searched for elsewhere. For example, in the Psalter of Metropolitan Daniil (1522–39) there was a list of all the Russian saints.

⁷ Golubinskiy 1903, 91–3.

to create estates for his growing military aristocracy. It was only by the 1550s, during the reign of Ivan IV, that the critics of ecclesiastical wealth demanded that the tsar should intervene and confiscate the estates of the wealthy monasteries.⁸

Thus the Josephite influence on the great princes of Moscow had far-reaching consequences for Moscow's political development. Moscow emerged as a powerful religious civilization, lacking a clear division of political and religious authority, or any real knowledge of political systems. Its idealism led Moscow to look for an ideal prince who would be the living icon of God, and who would guard its traditions. By crowning young Ivan IV as a tsar, the Josephite monastic party created a new confusion of authority. The position of the tsar in the Russian Church also blurred the division between the monastery and the outside world. Ivan IV became the first ideologist to rule Moscow, and following his Josephite teachers, he adopted a monastic conception of a prince as leader of an organic Christian civilization. Thus Ivan became the head of a monolithic religious civilization, in which sacred and secular history was blended.⁹

The political and religious ideology of sixteenth-century Moscow was demonstrated in a network of historical writings dealing with the political and ecclesiastical realities of the day. It is fitting to begin an examination of the roots of this ideology with Makariy's *Great Menology*, which he had compiled while archbishop of Novgorod. The Church had a long tradition of collecting religious texts, and the Greek *synaxarions* and Russian *prologs* represented the same idea of having spiritual readings organised according to the Church's calendar. The difference was that Makariy's *Menology* was huge in size and contained not only hagiographic lives of saints but also other religious writings: parts of the Bible; apocryphal texts; sermons, and so on. The scribes engaged in the editorial work prepared the old texts according to the literary style of the era, which Likhachev defined by the terms 'second monumentalism' or 'ceremonial monumentalism'.¹⁰ They also translated many new texts from Greek originals. The *Great Menology* was divided into 12 books, each providing readings for one month, with the lives of the saints and other religious readings organised according to the Church calendar. Thus

⁸ See Crummey 1987, 125–31; Billington 1970, 61–3.

⁹ Billington 1970, 61–9.

¹⁰ Likhachev 1985, 7.

each single book was huge in volume, consisting of 1,500–2,000 folios.¹¹

After his election as metropolitan of Moscow in 1542, Makariy enlarged and edited the *Great Menology*. Church scribes, most of whom remain anonymous, did the writing and editorial work, collecting hagiographic material from monasteries all over Russia. The earlier Novgorod edition of the *Great Menology* was elaborated upon, and the new edition, finished by 1552, was twice as large as the one which had been placed in the library of the St Sophia cathedral in 1541. One motive behind this massive operation was to claim the Greek and South Slavonic hagiographic inheritance for Moscow, effectively outstripping all political and ideological rivals in glorifying the tsar of Moscow. Miller even argues that Makariy felt a compulsion to make Moscow the national focus of Russian culture.¹²

Makariy's Moscow edition of the *Great Menology* embodied the idea of an empire as the mark of a chosen people. This model of imperial transfer was adapted to describe the events of world history, which witnessed an evolution from lower to higher forms. The fates of the great kingdoms and empires in world history were eagerly presented, and the apocryphal Book of Daniel and the *Apocalypse* of the Pseudo-Methodius formed part of the Moscow edition of the *Great Menology*. The prophet Daniel traced the rise and fall of kingdoms symbolically in the beasts of his vision, and the fates of ancient Babylon, Persia and Rome were seen in an apocalyptic light that assigned Moscow its own significant place in Christian history.¹³

Makariy had the chance to make significant changes to his Moscow edition of the *Great Menology*, and it was during this phase that the famous formula of the Three Romes was adapted for inclusion into it. This whole theory has been much discussed, the key question being whether the secular politics of Moscow was really laying serious claim to the Byzantine ideological inheritance. Andreas Ebbinghaus maintains that it was later historians who were eager to transfer the ideological pathos of Byzantium to fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Moscow, rather than the princes of Moscow themselves,¹⁴ while Jukka Korpela has suggested that the ideology of the Third Rome should

¹¹ Droblenkova 1988, 126–31.

¹² Miller 1979, 263–7.

¹³ Miller 1979, 271.

¹⁴ Ebbinghaus 1997, 69–73.

not be taken too literally, and that it was basically concerned with the universal Christian mission. Just as Moscow regarded itself as equal to Rome, it also claimed to be the New Jerusalem, for it was the need to provide protection for God's people, the Christians, that the imperial city was obliged to serve.¹⁵ Jaakko Lehtovirta suggests that only the outer core of the idea of the Christian emperor was borrowed from Byzantium, while the universal claim of the tsardom was never seriously put forward by the great princes of Moscow. Ivan IV's expansionistic politics towards the Polish lands that were once part of Kievan Russia—as well as his Livonian wars—were, according to Lehtovirta, only attempts to get back what he considered to be his ancestral lands. One of the main stimuli for adopting the title of tsar was the wish to gain equality with foreign rulers.¹⁶

This viewpoint was previously stressed by Dimitri Obolensky, who made an elaborate study of the relationship between the medieval Slavic states and Byzantium. Obolensky pointed out that the whole princely institution of medieval Russia resembled more the practices of the early German kings than those of the Byzantine emperors, and that the cult of national rulers had no model which can be found in Byzantium. The Russian princely cults owed much to the fact that they belonged to the same family, and the importance of the dynasty lay in its personification of the state, and as a symbol of its continuity. Also, the political implications of the theory of Moscow as the Third Rome were not taken too seriously by the governments of the time. In place of a medieval conception of the hierarchy of the states, the great princes of Moscow were above all guided by the notion of a family of European nations whose sovereigns were equal in status. Thus Obolensky concluded that it was 'Moscow the Second Kiev', not 'Moscow the Third Rome', which was the hallmark of their foreign policy.¹⁷

Much of the new ideological weight of Moscow's great princes was stressed during the reign of Ivan III. After Moscow had finally repudiated the sovereignty of the Mongols at the end of the 15th century, Ivan married Sophia Paleologus, niece of the last Byzantine emperor, and established a sumptuous court on the Byzantine pattern. He also put about the *Story of the Princes of Vladimir* (*Skazanie o*

¹⁵ Korpela 1998, 206–14.

¹⁶ Lehtovirta 1999, 282–361.

¹⁷ Obolensky 1971, 308–66.

knyaz'yakh Vladimirskikh), which claimed that the Byzantine emperor Constantine Monomakh (ruled 1042–55) had conferred the insignia and imperial crown on Vladimir Monomakh of Kiev. Through Kiev and its imperial status, Moscow claimed itself the heir to an imperial succession which went back to Augustus.¹⁸ The *Story* first appeared in the *Poslanie o Monomakhovom ventse* of Spiridon-Savva, written some time between the 1510s and 1523, at the command of Great Prince Vasiliy III of Moscow, while Spiridon-Savva was in exile at the Feropontov monastery.¹⁹

As the roots of Christianity had not originated in Russia, it was important to explain how Christianity came to prevail there. The same compulsion to explain society's Christian roots was experienced elsewhere in Europe too, where the stories of the first Christian kings were magnified in importance for the sake of converting the population.²⁰ The idea of supplanting the old Byzantine Empire with a new Slavic Empire which was born in Serbia and Bulgaria during the 14th century was transferred to Moscow after the infidel Turks swept into the Balkans. The ideology of Rome moving from one place to another was connected with the Christianisation of the Roman Empire, and with the shift of the centre of the known world that had occurred when the Emperor Constantine moved his capital to Constantinople, the 'Second Rome'. Comparisons between

¹⁸ The *Story* associates great heroes of antiquity, such as Alexander the Great, the Roman emperors Caesar and Augustus, and even the love affair of Anthony and Cleopatra, with the genealogy of the princes of Kiev, claiming kinship between the Emperor Augustus and the mythical Prus of the Prussian lands, a forefather of Rurik, founder of the Russian dynasty. *Skazanie o knyaz'yakh Vladimirskikh*, 283–95. See Hoskin 1997, 5.

¹⁹ The circumstances of the birth of the *Story of the Princes of Vladimir* reveal much of the complexity of the polemical writings, their birth, and further development in the hands of later abusers. Its first known author, Metropolitan Spiridon-Savva, was by origin a cleric from Tver. He did not have much luck in his career, for he was first imprisoned in Lithuania by King Kazimir, and after returning to Russia, he was immediately exiled to Feropontov monastery by Great Prince Vasiliy III. Spiridon-Savva showed great activity in writing. While in captivity in Feropontov monastery he composed several writings and hagiographies. *Skazanie o knyaz'yakh Vladimirskikh*, consisting of the legends of the ancestors of the Rurikovichi princes and the coming of the Byzantine regalia to Vladimir Monomakh, was possibly ordered to be written by Great Prince Vasiliy III himself. The description of the legend of the crown of Monomakh was later altered, because of Savva's great enthusiasm for presenting the princes of his native Tver as great heroes in the battle against the Mongols, and constantly calling them 'great princes'. Dmitrieva, *Skazanie o knyaz'yakh Vladimirskikh* 1989, 370–1; Dmitrieva, *Spiridon-Savva* 1989, 408–11.

²⁰ See Klaniczay 1990, 2–93; Klaniczay 1993, 357–60.

Olga and Vladimir of Kievan Russia and Helen and Constantine implied that Russia had emerged in terms of its imperial rights when it had accepted Christianity.²¹

The transfer of Orthodox hopes to Moscow had been dramatised by the elaborately staged marriage in 1472 of Ivan III to Sophia Paleologus, and by the introduction of the former imperial seal of the two-headed eagle. The roots of the theories of Moscow's supremacy were seen when Metropolitan Zosima established the great prince of Moscow, Ivan III, as the leader of Orthodox Christianity. Zosima backed up the emphasis on the role of Prince Vladimir of Kiev in transferring the notion of a Christian ruler to Russia. Vladimir's recognition as the 'Second Constantine' was reflected in this ideology, following the catastrophe of the unsuccessful Church councils of 1437–9 in Florence-Ferrara. Zosima's theory is set out in his 1492 commentary on the Paschal Canon, which was one of the first statements in which Moscow was viewed as an imperial city, a new Constantinople, with Ivan III as a new Emperor Constantine.²²

Interestingly, one of the most popular proclamations of the 'theory of the Third Rome' did not originate in Moscow but in Novgorod, manifested in the *Tale of the White Cowl* (*Povest' o belom klobuke*). A tale written some time at the end of the 15th century describes how a white cowl used by a Roman bishop was carried to Novgorod when the faith of Rome turned out to be unorthodox. It recounts how Pope Sylvester and the Emperor Constantine appeared to Patriarch Philotheus of Constantinople in a vision, and persuaded him to send the cowl to Russia, where the faith had been preserved in a pure form:

The ancient city of Rome has broken away from the glory and faith of Christ because of its pride and ambition. In the new Rome, which is the city of Constantinople, the Christian faith will also perish through the violence of the sons of Hagar. In the third Rome, which will be the land of Russia, the Grace of the Holy Spirit will be revealed. Know then, Philotheus, that all Christians will finally unite into one Russian nation because of its Orthodoxy. Since ancient times and by the will of Constantine, Emperor of the Earth, the imperial crown of the imperial city is predestined to be given to the Russian tsar. But the white cowl, by the will of the King of Heaven, Jesus Christ, will be given to the archbishop of Novgorod the Great. And this White Cowl

²¹ Miller 1979, 271–6.

²² Crummey 1987, 134–5.

is more honourable than the crown of the tsar, for it is an imperial crown of the archangelic spiritual order.²³

The *Tale* belongs to the same group of polemic writings which was represented in the West by possibly the most famous forgery of the whole Middle Ages, the *Testament of Constantine*. Possibly its roots go back to fourteenth-century Novgorod, but it was certainly in existence during the time of Archbishop Gennadiy (1484–1504), who was elected by the citizens of Novgorod as an opponent to the candidate nominated in Moscow. Archbishop Gennadiy himself started to wear a white cowl, and established a special ritual in its honour. Based on its fervour to raise the position of the archbishop of Novgorod over the earthly ruler, it is evident that the *Tale* was conceived with the purpose of defending the sovereignty of the Church in Novgorod from encroachment by the great princes of Moscow and its clerics.

The *Tale* was met with great enthusiasm in religious circles throughout Russia, and has survived in several manuscripts of the 16th to 18th centuries.²⁴ It developed into an ideological work that glorified Russian Orthodox Christianity, and at the beginning of the 16th century, the idea developed further into a theory of Moscow as the Third Rome, clearly and concisely formulated by the monk Filofei of Pskov. Filofei wrote a letter to the great prince's representative in Pskov in 1523, in which he applied the biblical prophecies of Daniel, Ezra and Revelations to Russia's new position in the world. Referring to the Book of Revelations, he concluded:

All Christian realms will come to an end and will unite into one single realm of our sovereign, that is, into the Russian realm, according to the prophetic books. Both Romes fell, the third endures, and a fourth there will never be.²⁵

This theory defined Moscow as the sole defender of the eastern Orthodox faith, which was the only true Christian doctrine. Filofei's words and images quickly entered the mainstream of Muscovite

²³ *Povest' o novgorodskom belom klobuke*, 224.

²⁴ The *Tale of the White Cowl* was condemned as heretical by a Church council of 1666/7 during Patriarch Nikon's term of office. The council rejected the whole notion of Moscow as the Third Rome, converting the Russians' existing national myth into a heritage of Old Believers, who opposed the state and its increasingly cosmopolitan outlook. See Hosking 1997, 68–9.

²⁵ Andreev 1959, 28. See Crummey 1987, 136.

ecclesiastical thinking, and it is notable that it was only the Moscow edition of the *Great Menology* that contained his famous letter.

It is obvious that the Moscow editions of the *Great Menology* had bigger tasks to accomplish, since much had happened on the Russian political scene very soon after the Novgorod version of the *Great Menology* was written. The *Life* of Aleksandr was not adopted into the Novgorod edition of the *Great Menology*, even though Makariy had plenty of scribes who collected religious writings from the libraries of monasteries all over Novgorod and Pskov. One reason for this was obviously that, although the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* existed in both the Novgorod and Pskov chronicles, and it must have been known in Novgorod, he was not commemorated in the churches of Novgorod and Pskov, and thus had no feast-day in their calendars. Only a few years later the *Life* of the pious and Orthodox Prince Aleksandr was, however, presented side by side with other important historical narratives as material which supported the official myth of Moscow's tsardom, its new role in the Christian world and in Christian history.

The important and far-reaching step was taken when the 17-year-old Ivan IV became the crowned tsar and autocrat of all Russia on 16 January 1547, when Metropolitan Makariy invested him with the imperial regalia in a ceremony at the Cathedral of the Dormition in the Kremlin. Miller notes that the coronation rite of Ivan IV was basically the same as that of Dmitriy Ivanovich in 1498, the earliest of the great princely coronations of which we have any details.²⁶ Both Dmitriy Ivanovich and Ivan IV appealed to the ancestral traditions of the Muscovite rulers to establish their 'God-given' rights to the office of great prince, and Makariy only had to make additions to the parts of the ceremony that concerned the imperial claims of the future tsar.²⁷

The historical events which led to the coronation of a great prince of Moscow as the first tsar are naturally of great interest, and the

²⁶ The coronation of the 15-year-old Dmitriy Ivanovich did not elevate his prestige as a ruler, however, for during his short joint reign with his grandfather, Ivan III, he was left without any real power, and was soon displaced and imprisoned by his uncle, the future Vasilij III. Thus the crowned Great Prince Dmitriy and his mother died in prison, rejected and disgraced. Crummey 1987, 110–11; Tvorogov 1994, 100.

²⁷ Miller 1967, 565. See Barsov 1883, 32–8. The Austrian Sigismund von Herberstein described the event in his *Notes upon Russia*, printed in *Rerum Moscoviticarum*, 39–44. The *Nikon Chronicle* also briefly mentions the ceremony.

preparations for this rite were undoubtedly made carefully. Half a century later, a Dutch visitor to Russia, Isaac Massa, described how the clergy and some of the most notable members of the community had decided to crown Ivan in order to restore his authority after a long period of quarrels between the leading boyar clans during his minority.²⁸ When Great Prince Vasiliy III, Ivan's father, died in 1533, Ivan was only three years old. He was a firstborn son from Vasiliy's second marriage, his first marriage, with Salomoniya, being annulled because of her infertility. Vasiliy's second wife was Elena Glinskaya, a beauty from the distinguished Glinskiy family, which also had a well-established reputation in Livonia and Germany on account of its political activity. After the marriage of Elena and Vasiliy, the Glinskiy family took an active part in the politics of Moscow. After Elena Glinskaya died in 1538—possibly poisoned—bitter rivalry broke out between the high boyar clans in the court, the two main protagonists besides the Glinskiys being the Belskiys, magnates of Lithuanian origin who had served in the court of the great prince ever since Vasiliy III took Fedor Belskiy into his service in 1482, and the Shuiskiys, a noble family descended from Andrey Yaroslavich, brother of Aleksandr Nevskiy.²⁹

The events that brought Makariy to the position of metropolitan were also connected with the struggle for power between the Shuiskiy and Belskiy families. Once Vasiliy III had died, even the metropolitan himself could not be assured of his position. There was little Metropolitan Daniil could do when the Shuiskiy clan brought him down after the death of Elena Glinskaya. A new metropolitan, Iosaf Skrypitsyn from the Holy Trinity monastery, was appointed in 1540. Iosaf, however, proved unacceptable to the Shuiskiy family, because he helped their rival, the head of the Belskiy family, out of prison. This caused Ivan Shuiskiy to rush from Novgorod to Moscow in January 1542 in order to arrest Belskiy again, and he had Metropolitan Iosaf exiled to the Kirillov monastery. After Belskiy was executed in Belozero, power was once again in the hands of the Shuiskiy clan. On 19 March 1542, Makariy, then archbishop of Novgorod, was appointed metropolitan.³⁰

²⁸ See Lehtovirta 1999, 139.

²⁹ Tvorogov 1994, 109, 111.

³⁰ Makariy 1857–83, vol. 3, pt 2, chp. II.

What effect this chaotic struggle for power at the Moscow court may have had on Metropolitan Makariy's decision to start preparations for the coronation of the future great prince, can only be guessed at. As regards the imperial pretensions of the Moscow great princes, power still rested with the boyar clans, which used the autocratic façade to lend some stability to a power coalition which would otherwise have fallen apart in perpetual feuding. The preparations for the coronation were made in Josephite circles, the religious thinking of which laid much weight on the relationship between the *sacerdotium* and the *regnum*. In all likelihood, their hopes lay in influencing the institution of the ruler, which was now being strengthened in order to tame the boyars and make the reality more like the image given in the ideological writings.³¹

As the 17-year-old adolescent was crowned and guided by Josephite clerics, no doubt high hopes were asserted to a ruler who was expected to carry the weight of his God-ordained office in harmony with Christian ideology. It is obvious that the conquest of Kazan had an enormous influence on the whole ideology of the tsardom of Moscow, as this made the sons of Ishmael an essential target at the ideological level. This makes the raising of Aleksandr Yaroslavich as the most distinguished saintly prince somewhat controversial, as his great war efforts were, after all, directed towards the West, and it was in this respect that he was an invincible martial hero. Aleksandr Nevskiy was canonised when Ivan IV was just at the beginning of his political career, and one cannot imagine that Ivan himself had much to do with the decision which led to Aleksandr's canonisation. Makariy's Church council must inevitably have had a programme that had been carefully prepared for some time before the canonisations took place.

Obviously the huge canonisation process and the intensified writing of the hagiographic and liturgical texts had a great impetus on the content of the *Great Menology*. The first Moscow edition of the *Great Menology* was finished in 1552, five years after Ivan IV's coronation, and was donated to the library of the Cathedral of the Dormition in the Kremlin. This contained the edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr sometimes called the Vladimirian edition, or the *Eulogy* (*Slovo Pokhval'noe*). The writing of this new edition of Aleksandr's *Life*

³¹ Lehtovirta 1999, 139; Hosking 1997, 47.

was a direct consequence of the Church council of 1547, which canonised Aleksandr Nevskiy and established his commemoration throughout the Russian Orthodox Church.³² Golubinskiy argued that it seems that, unlike in the Catholic West, many of the Russian saints who were raised in status to be venerated as officially canonised saints had their first hagiographies and liturgical services written only after the canonisation had taken place, as its direct consequence. In his opinion, Aleksandr Nevskiy had his *Life* well before that, but the liturgical service text, the *sluzhba*, was written only after the canonisations of 1547 and 1549.³³

As discussed earlier, the canonisation process in the medieval Russian Orthodox Church definitely lacked much of the bureaucracy that the western Church adopted after the pope's role in affirming canonised saints was established in the 13th century. The commemoration of a new saint usually grew up organically from the reverence shown towards the relics of a saint who had the gift of performing miracles, either during his lifetime or after his death. The saint was first recognised in the local parish or monastery, and if the cult gained wider popularity, its observation spread further. Eventually the saint would be assigned his own feast-day in the Church calendar, usually the day of his death or the day of the opening of his relics, or both. The direct written indications of cultic status were the production of a *Life* (*zhitie*) and a service (*sluzhba*), and texts to be chanted during the liturgy on his feast-day. A central place in the cult was always occupied by the relics, and if the person was celebrated as a miracle-working saint, he would be given his own sarcophagus, or even a side chapel in the church where he was buried.³⁴

The first Moscow edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*, was organically connected with the needs of the Russian Church to highlight the strength of their miracle-working saints. In the lengthy prologue the anonymous writer describes how his humble skills were harnessed for this important work of praising the new saint:

When he came to an age that enabled him to receive the sceptre of the Russian land, the holy tsar, great prince of the whole of Russia,

³² Droblenkova 1988, 126–33; see Miller 1979, 268, 276; Dmitrieva 1993, 211.

³³ Golubinskiy 1903, 96.

³⁴ Golubinskiy 1903, 40–2.

Ivan Vasil'evich, had a thought in his heart that came from God to praise God's favourite, the one who was invincible in wars, another Constantine, the new Vladimir, who baptised the whole Russian land, the great miracle-worker, Great Prince Aleksandr. This task was to be accomplished by the office of the great Metropolitan Makariy, and on the orders of the autocrat we were devoted to this task, together with all the holy churches, and commanded to search for information about the miracles that took place at his holy grave.³⁵

The interest of Tsar Ivan and Metropolitan Makariy essentially lay in the miracles performed by the new saints, and as the result of the council, a process for writing down these miracles was established. Ivan mentioned in his speech at the *Stoglav* council in 1551 that he had summoned the clerics and scribes to gather information on the miracles performed by Russian saints, stating that this task had been fulfilled in 1549, when he was 19 years old. This is the only reference to the Church council held in 1549, since no *ukazy* or acts have survived in connection with it. The basic course of events can be sketched out, however, and the demand for miracles becomes abundantly clear from this.³⁶

The canonisation of Aleksandr Nevskiy as 'a miracle-worker' was the impetus that ultimately generated the need to compose a fresh *Life* that suited the style of the era. In addition, the emphasis in his earlier *Life* had clearly been on his heroic deeds during his lifetime and not so much on the miracles that he had worked, except for that which occurred at his funeral, when Aleksandr extended his hand and took the testament book (*dukhovnaya gramota*) by himself; this was the miracle which was witnessed by Metropolitan Kirill and the cellarer Sevastyan. As in the western Church, a *Vita et miracula* was necessary for official canonisation, and miracles were an obligatory criterion for sainthood.³⁷ Consequently, the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr gained a passage describing the mir-

³⁵ *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 15.

³⁶ Golubinskiy 1903, 102–6.

³⁷ See Goodich 1983, 171–2; Deloos 1983, 207. The list of miraculous acts of healing accomplished by the saint's relics was a literary pattern in the lives of the saints that had been inherited from the Gospels, and it was repeated universally throughout the Middle Ages. Miracles were an integral part of the medieval way of thinking, as was the acceptance of the miraculous as a basic dimension of life. God was seen as constantly intervening in human life in inexplicable ways, most obviously in connection with the power of his saints at the places where their relics lay. Ward 1982, 32–5.

acles propounded at his grave, as reported by a cross-section of the population.

While the identity of the author of the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*, the first new *Life* of Aleksandr to be produced in the era of Makariy, has remained obscure, it is almost certain that this edition was written in Vladimir, which the author calls 'our city'. A large proportion of the miracles which took place at Aleksandr's grave are naturally based on the eyewitness accounts given by the monks of the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir, the place where he was buried. Also, the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* has in its final pages words of praise which clearly refer to liturgical usage. This has raised the question of the author's identity, since it is known that the liturgical service for his feast-day was written by a monk called Mikhail from the same monastery. Since the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* shows that the author had borrowed passages from a liturgical source, many scholars are convinced that the author was the same monk Mikhail.³⁸ The wording of the liturgical part of the *Slovo* is, however, not identical to that of the service written by Mikhail and, what is more, the author even writes about the monastery in a distant manner, as 'that monastery' rather than 'our monastery', as one might have expected if the writer had been a prominent member of it.³⁹ Therefore the identity of the author of the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* must not be taken as resolved. Most probably the author of the *Slovo* was from the city of Vladimir and wrote the *Life* on the orders of Metropolitan Makariy soon after Aleksandr Nevskiy's canonisation sometime around 1550.⁴⁰

The *Slovo Pokhval'noe* begins with the title, 'Eulogy to the pious Great Prince Aleksandr, who is called Nevskiy, the new miracle-worker, the story of his life and the miracles he performed'.⁴¹ The *Slovo* follows the structure of the First Edition very carefully, with only a few stylistic changes to the original story. Its author highlights

³⁸ At least Klyuchevskiy believed so. Miller has also argued that Mikhail was the author of the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*. Klyuchevskiy 1871, 239; Miller 1979, 276. See Mansikka (1913) 1984, 110–11.

³⁹ Mansikka (1913) 1984, 121–2; Serebryanskiy 1915, 214.

⁴⁰ According to Okhotnikova, the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* was included in Makariy's *Great Menology* in 1550. The text itself has, however, no indication as to its writing date, and the Uspenskiy edition of the *Great Menology* in which it was included was donated to the Cathedral of the Dormition (*Uspenskiy sobor*) in the Moscow Kremlin in 1552. Thus it can only be concluded that the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* was written before that. See Okhotnikova 1987, 360.

⁴¹ *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 15.

the war descriptions to place a more exciting emphasis on the fierceness of the battle, and leaves some details out by shortening the account of the deeds of the six brave men, and by omitting Aleksandr's speech to the people of Pskov entirely. Otherwise, the structure and content of the old *Life* remained almost untouched. The changes that the writer of the *Slovo* made were occasioned by the liturgical demands and the more emphatically hagiographic style. He placed more emphasis on traditional hagiographic conventions by stressing Aleksandr's pious education and his religious nature.

One significant change was made in the introduction, where Aleksandr was referred to as 'another Constantine, the new Vladimir'.⁴² As the *Great Menology* contained an enormous amount of hagiographic material, the *Life* of Prince Vladimir was naturally also important, and his efforts to Christianise the Russian lands and support the new faith were major themes. He was called a 'second Moses' or a 'second Constantine', and Kiev was depicted as a 'second Jerusalem'.⁴³ Why was this reference to the baptiser of the Russian people attached to the image of Aleksandr? To insist on Aleksandr Nevskiy being 'another Constantine, the new Vladimir' is peculiar, since Vladimir and Constantine were comparable because of their roles in converting their empires to Christianity, whereas there was no reference to any action of that kind in Aleksandr's *Life*. How could there have been? The heartlands of the Russian principalities had long been Christianised by Aleksandr's time, and there is no information on Aleksandr Nevskiy having taken any special measures to convert any pagan tribes living, for example, in the vast lands bordering on Novgorod.

The reference to Aleksandr as a 'new Vladimir' must therefore be based on other things rather than on historical facts and the conversion of his subjects to Christianity. Some versions of the First Edition of the *Life* had already reported the date of the battle of the Neva, 15 July, as being the feast-day of St Vladimir. The exact origin of the cult of Prince Vladimir of Kiev has been one of the burning questions that have worried scholars from the 1880s up to the present day. There are no extant icons of him dating from before the 15th century, and the first full-length *Life* appeared only in the

⁴² *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 16.

⁴³ Miller 1979, 276, 283.

16th century.⁴⁴ It is often claimed that his cult arose in Novgorod during Aleksandr Nevskiy's lifetime, since he was mentioned in connection with the date of the battle of the Neva,⁴⁵ but even this reference is not present in all the manuscripts of the First Edition. Although it appears in the *Life* as included in the *Laurentian Chronicle*, it is not mentioned in the *Pskov II Chronicle* version, and Begunov also left it out of his reconstruction of the First Edition.⁴⁶

It is thus obvious that the *Life* of Aleksandr has been of enormous significance in its allusions to the development of the cult of St Vladimir as the baptiser of Russia. His role as the baptiser of the Russian lands has given him a well-established position in the chronicles and writings of the churchmen.⁴⁷ When his feast-day was included in the official Church calendar has, however, been left obscure. As 15 July was mentioned for the first time in the *Life* as contained in the *Laurentian Chronicle* as a date when Prince Vladimir was commemorated, we cannot date the official cult of Vladimir to any earlier than 1377. Fennell attempted to date the origin of St Vladimir's feast by reference to its first mention in the *Laurentian Chronicle*.⁴⁸ Since he believed that the *Life* of Aleksandr had already been included in the chronicle edition of 1305, which was supposedly copied faithfully and directly by the monk Lavrentiy, his dating of the feast to the year 1305 was still not based on proper source evidence, since many of the scholars who have studied the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* are convinced that it was the monk Lavrentiy who added the *Life* of Aleksandr to his chronicle in 1377.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Fennell 1988, 299.

⁴⁵ Golubinskiy argued that Vladimir was locally canonised in Novgorod sometime around 1240, when the battle of the Neva took place. Golubinskiy 1903, 63. Vernadsky for his part argued that the official status of Vladimir's saintly feast-day was given when Aleksandr died in 1263. Vernadsky 1959, 305. Khoroshev claimed that the cult of St Vladimir was strengthened in Novgorod during the 13th century, and especially during the years 1240–63, i.e. between the battle of the Neva and Aleksandr's death. Khoroshev 1986, 84–6.

⁴⁶ *Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis'*, 12; *Povesti o zhitii*, 188.

⁴⁷ The writing of Ilarion, dated to 1037–50, highlights the significance of Prince Vladimir as the baptiser of the Russian lands and draws a parallel between him and the Emperor Constantine. The *Primary Chronicle* also acknowledged Vladimir's position as the prince who led the Russian people into the light of Christian belief. His position as a respected and important figure was already well established and widely acknowledged in Kievan Russia. See *Slovo o zakone i blagodati Ilariona*, 42–6.

⁴⁸ Fennell 1988, 302–3.

⁴⁹ Serebryanskiy 1915, 177; Shlyapkin 1915, 4–5; Begunov 1971, 111–20; Begunov, *Russkie istochniki* 1995, 55; cf. Lur'e 1976, 17–36.

The second connection of the *Life* with St Vladimir is the episode in which the pope tries to convince Aleksandr to turn to the Roman Catholic faith. Here lies the only parallel between Aleksandr and Vladimir who, according to the pages of the chronicles, made a thorough investigation of all the main religions, Islam, Judaism, the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches, and ended up by choosing the Greek Orthodox religion because of the inexpressible beauty of its churches and liturgy.⁵⁰ Whatever the case may have been, the scene with the Roman envoys was presented in the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* precisely as in the First Edition of the *Life*, so that the author did not touch the original storyline of the *Life* at all and made no references to Prince Vladimir's exclusion of non-Orthodox Christian sects.⁵¹ Thus the parallel between Aleksandr and Vladimir remained a weak one.

Likhachev and Khoroshev both claim that Vladimir became popular through the works of the Kulikovo cycle, which caused him to become a symbol of the nation.⁵² This is a highly overestimated evaluation, however, for none of the works of the Kulikovo cycle did much to raise the cultic status of Prince Vladimir, although the battle waged by Dmitriy Donskoy was clearly undertaken on behalf of Christianity, in opposition to the pagan Mongols. The tales of the Kulikovo cycle place more emphasis on the military saints who are familiar from the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* than on Prince Vladimir of Kiev, as is clearly visible in the final words of the *Life of Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich*:

Rome is celebrating Peter and Paul, Asia John the Baptist, India the Apostle Foma, and Jerusalem Jacob. Andrey, the brother of our Lord, is celebrated by all the land of Pomor'e, the Emperor Constantine by Greece, Vladimir by Kiev and its neighbours, but you, Great Prince Dmitriy, are celebrated by the whole Russian land.⁵³

Ultimately, the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* retained all the essential features of the old image of Aleksandr Nevskiy which were depicted in the First Edition of the *Life*. It adopted a conservative view, nurturing the original structure and storyline of the *Life* of Aleksandr, which is understandable, if it is presumed that its author was a cleric from

⁵⁰ *Povest' vremennykh let*, 48–9.

⁵¹ Cf. *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 24–5.

⁵² Khoroshev 1986, 125; cf. Likhachev 1980, 8.

⁵³ *Slovo o zhitiï velikogo knyazya Dmitriya Ivanovicha*, 226.

the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God, where the First Edition of the *Life* had been kept for centuries in the library. Its purpose was ultimately to meet the demands of the official canonisation process, and thus the essential new part of this edition was the list of miracles. Once the author had finished the biographical part, he turned to this new task:

Let us thank God, O brothers, Who loves people, and His Holy Mother, who gave us such a source of light. Not even after his death did this great and miraculous autocrat leave or abandon his flock, but constantly, day and night, he strengthens and protects us against visible and invisible enemies, offering his good deeds to those who are in need.⁵⁴

The first of the miracles listed showed Aleksandr protecting the people against visible enemies. This was the miracle which took place when Great Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich confronted Khan Mamai at Kulikovo. The author also recounts that when Aleksandr's coffin was opened, 'no decomposition could be smelled', important evidence of a person's sanctity:

This was heard from a certain priest by the name of Prokopei from the Church of St Dmitriy in the town of Vladimir, who said: 'I heard from Father Ivan of this miracle, which took place in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God, beside the coffin of the Orthodox Great Prince Aleksandr. In the loneliness of the night, when the servants of the church were sleeping in the front of the church, the candles were seen to light up by themselves, and two pious old men were seen walking from the holy altar, talking like this: "Lord Aleksandr, arise and hurry in order to help your relative Great Prince Dmitriy, so that he can defeat the foreigners!" And at that moment the Great Prince arose from his coffin, and soon he was gone. All the priests of the church saw that vision. They were speechless for a while, and then they dug at the site where the coffin was placed, and sanctified his well-preserved blessed relics, from which no decomposition could be smelled... and from that day many miraculous acts of healing began to take place among those who approached him in faith.'⁵⁵

According to this report, it was precisely after this great miracle, in which Aleksandr rose from his grave to assist Dmitriy on the battlefield, that the miraculous acts of healing started to take place at his grave. These miracles involved quite ordinary cures of kinds that

⁵⁴ *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 27–8.

⁵⁵ *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 27.

were customarily mentioned in descriptions of miracle-working saints; the blind received their sight, those possessed by spirits were relieved, cripples walked, and so forth.⁵⁶ After detailing 12 such cases which occurred at Aleksandr's grave, the author noted:

We are forced to neglect many other stories about the holy miracles of equal value on account of their great number, but because of their usefulness we would like to hear of the many incidents that have rarely been reported. Just as the altitude of the heavens cannot be measured nor the depths of the seas fathomed, in the same way the miraculous deeds of this man favoured by God cannot be counted.⁵⁷

The ending of the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* stresses properly the context of the miraculous relics of Prince Aleksandr, who was 'favoured by God', as the medieval Russians used to say of their saints, and thus underlines the importance of Vladimir as the city housing them:

Alas, we throw ourselves beside his honourable grave, and lovingly cry out: 'Rejoice, O revered Aleksandr, who makes the land of Russia to flourish. Rejoice, O light radiating like an eternally shining sun, enlightening the fatherland with unequalled gifts of miracles . . . He did not arrive from Rome, he did not come down from the Mount of Sinai, but he came from the land of Russia, a glorious miracle-worker. Rejoice and exult, too, O praised city of Vladimir, in brilliant celebration. Rejoice, O Church of the Most Holy Mother of God, to own a treasure of this kind, a source of divine healing, the relics of the blessed Great Prince Aleksandr.'⁵⁸

One could not express the pride and pleasure of a local church and town in housing such miracle-working relics any more genuinely than was done in the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*. The last part, praising Aleksandr as a radiant miracle-worker of the city of Vladimir, met the demands of the liturgical service, which was no doubt used in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir on the feast-day of Aleksandr Nevskiy, at the latest after the canonisation had taken place.

But the Orthodox Prince Aleksandr Nevskiy had a greater role in the process of developing the official myth of Moscow. The *Slovo Pokhval'noe* was important in fulfilling the demands of the officially raised cult of the new miracle-worker, by presenting his hagiographic

⁵⁶ *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 27–30.

⁵⁷ *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 30.

⁵⁸ *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 30–1.

Life supplemented by a long list of miracles which authorised Prince Aleksandr's status as a proper saint. As a historical narrative and a means of projecting the image of an ideal ruler, however, it did not have very much to give, on account of its antiquated form. Thus the development of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was soon to turn away from the old hagiography and face more openly the constant organic change in attitudes that had affected the treasury of Russian historical narratives, the chronicles.

1.2. *Silence over the Mongol conquest reconsidered in
Vasiliy-Varlaam's edition of the Life*

As noted in the previous section, the new edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* written for the first Moscow edition of the *Great Menology* in 1552, the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*, had little to add to the old image of Aleksandr as established in the First Edition. However, since chronicles had dealt with passages from Aleksandr's *Life* together with other dramatic happenings of the era, the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* must have been seen as disconnected from the ideological setting of the official history of sixteenth-century Moscow, especially in its neutral attitude towards the Mongol conquest. It is thus small wonder that a totally new edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, that of Vasiliy-Varlaam, was added to the second Moscow edition of the *Great Menology*, the Tsarskii edition, which was donated to the tsar himself in 1554 and deposited in his palace at the Kremlin.

As discussed, the advantage of the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* was, above all, that it fulfilled the requirements for the life of a canonised saint; it was based on old extant hagiographic material and included an imposing list of the saint's miracles. The image of Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich was nevertheless much more useful for educative purposes as an example of an ideal ruler and a warrior, especially since at that same time the newly crowned Tsar Ivan IV was taking his first steps as a ruler and as a military commander. The account of the *History of Kazan* (*Kazanskaya istoriya*), originally written in the 1560s,⁵⁹

⁵⁹ The anonymous author of the *History of Kazan* was a Russian who was held as a prisoner in Kazan in 1532–51. His work presents a history of Kazan covering a period of three centuries, beginning with the Mongol conquest and ending with the wars of Ivan IV. It became widely popular, and is preserved in over 200 manuscripts, of which the oldest are, however, dated only to the 17th century.

projects an important image of Tsar Ivan as a warrior prince and describes his relationship to the biblical war heroes, stating that Metropolitan Makariy dispatched him on his expedition, 'as the angel of God sent Gideon against the Midianite kings, and as David confronted the mighty Goliath', and that he gave Ivan 'not visible but invisible armour, the cross of Christ'. Ivan, for his part, is described entering the battle with the wisdom and courage of Alexander of Macedonia.⁶⁰

Metropolitan Makariy actively supported his young protégé in his first expeditions against the Kazan khanate, and the young Ivan sought the metropolitan's guidance in these matters. Two years after his coronation, in 1549, the 19-year-old Ivan summoned the metropolitan to Vladimir to give his blessing on an army setting out to march to Kazan. Makariy complied with the tsar's request and blessed the army in Vladimir, exhorting all the officers, princes and boyars to put their faith in God and His saints in their heroic fight against the enemies of Russia. This was only one of the metropolitan's many prayers uttered at the request of Tsar Ivan on behalf of his Kazan campaigns. In 1552 Makariy assured Ivan that the whole clergy and all the Orthodox people would pray for him, and he particularly advised Ivan and his army to resist the sins of pride and drunkenness and to remember the four holy commandments: bravery; wisdom; justice, and moderation. In accordance with this, he promised a martyr's crown to everyone who spilled his blood and died in the battle against the enemies of Christ.⁶¹ The Kazan conquest took place in 1552, the same year as the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* was included in the first Moscow edition of the *Great Menology*.

The *Life* of Aleksandr included in the second Moscow edition of the *Great Menology* in 1554 was written by a man called Vasiliy, who identified himself at the end, asking St Aleksandr to make holy intercession for him, 'the sinful slave Vasiliy'.⁶² Vasiliy was the author of several hagiographies and liturgical texts and, deviating from the anonymous writers of the Middle Ages, he identified himself in his writings.⁶³ His edition articulates the relationship with the pagan Mongols quite straightforwardly, thus corresponding much better to

⁶⁰ *Kazanskaya istoriya*, 456–9.

⁶¹ Makariy, 1857–83, vol. 3, pt 2, chp. II.

⁶² *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 47.

⁶³ See Dmitrieva 1988, 112.

the requirements of Ivan's own experiences with the Kazan Tatars. Just as the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* was of extreme importance in establishing Aleksandr Nevskiy as one of the new miracle-workers whose prayers were influential in strengthening the tsars of Moscow, Vasilii's edition strikingly demonstrated in what field the prayers of St Aleksandr Nevskiy were intended to exercise their influence. The *Life* inserted into the 1554 edition of the *Great Menology* was well matched to the military exploits of the young Ivan, and the closing words describe in a concrete way what kind of protection the new saint was being asked to pray for:

O great miracle-worker, good Prince Aleksandr, pray for Christ our God to guard your relative, the Orthodox tsar, great prince of Russia, and to give him victories over his enemies and triumphs over the pagans . . .⁶⁴

Judging from the details in his literary works, which fell between the 1540s and the 1560s, one could conclude that Vasiliy may well have been of Pskovian origin. He lived in the Krypetskiy monastery in Pskov from 1558–64, where he took monastic vows and assumed the monkish name of Varlaam.⁶⁵ He was one of Metropolitan Makariy's scribes, and wrote three hagiographic lives for the *Menology*. One of the earliest lives he wrote was that of Efrosin of Pskov, in 1547. Around the years 1550/2 he wrote the *Life of Vsevolod-Gavriil*, another princely saint from Pskov who was canonised in 1549. The accurate date of his *Life* of Aleksandr is not known, and it can only be presumed that he wrote it some time after the canonisation in 1547 and before 1554, when the Tsarskii edition of the *Great Menology* was donated to the tsar.⁶⁶

Like the First Edition, the edition of Vasiliy-Varlaam can also be roughly divided into two parts in terms of its structure: the first describing Aleksandr's major battles with the *Nemtsy* and the Lithuanians, and the second dealing with his relationship with the Golden Horde. The first part is somewhat longer, but Vasiliy's psychological insight into Aleksandr's relationship with the pagan Mongols makes his edition harmonious and well-balanced. In the first part he treats Aleksandr as a great warrior. The prologue is long and shows

⁶⁴ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 47–8.

⁶⁵ Mansikka 1913, 126.

⁶⁶ Dmitrieva 1993, 211.

the same stylistic treatment as was present in the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*. Again Aleksandr's pious education and humble, Christ-serving character is brought well to the fore. Among the obligatory list of his ancestors, his likeness to St Vladimir, who baptised the whole land of the Russians, is once again emphasised, as was the case in the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*.⁶⁷ After a long introduction containing liturgical and hagiographic patterns, Vasilii began on the part that combined his edition with the old text.

As in the chronicles, Vasilii's treatment of the First Edition began only with the coming of Andreash to meet Aleksandr, just as the Queen of Sheba had once arrived to see the wisdom of Solomon.⁶⁸ Thus all the old epithets regarding Aleksandr's virtues—the looks of Joseph, the strength of Samson, the wisdom of Solomon and the cunning of the Emperor Vespasian—were left aside. What Vasilii was looking for was an easily understandable story that gave a harmonious and logical image of its hero. Thus his edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* is unequalled in its historical depth. He combined the old *Life* with the historical narrations of the chronicles, and produced a synthesis which matched not only with the princely hagiographic ideals of his own era, but also with its historical consciousness. His historical narration explained many of the gaps that the discontinuous and fragmentary account in the first *Life* had left, but at the same time he left some of the details of the First Edition out if they did not fit with his clear and psychologically well-defined image of Aleksandr.

There are several things in the narration of the Neva episode that Vasilii changed from the First Edition. He left the deeds of the six brave men unmentioned, and also the miracle of the angel at the battle of the Neva. This shows his familiarity with the *Life* of the *Pskov II Chronicle*, but also his knowledge of local Novgorod information in his treatment of the Neva episode, in that he not only described how the Swedish king came to the Neva with his troops, including his chieftains and bishops, the Swedes and some *Murmanskite Nemtsy* from Norway,⁶⁹ but he also (according to local fifteenth-century information as presented in the *Novgorod IV Chronicle*) named the king of the Land of Midnight as King Velger (Jarl Birger).⁷⁰

⁶⁷ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 33–5.

⁶⁸ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 34.

⁶⁹ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 35.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

After the Neva description, Vasiliy filled the historical gap in the First Edition between the two great battles of 1240 and 1242 by inserting details from the Novgorod chronicles on Aleksandr's dispute with the people of Novgorod and his departure for Pereyasavl after the battle of the Neva. He described how the *Nemtsy* approached the vicinity of Novgorod, and how the people were forced to plead for Yaroslav Vsevolodovich to give his son Aleksandr back to them. This historical detail taken from the Novgorod chronicles was thus included in the part of the *Life* that highlights Aleksandr's superb military skills. As reported in the Novgorod chronicles, Yaroslav first offered his second son, Andrey, and it was only in response to the pleadings and prayers of Archbishop Spiridon that he handed Aleksandr back to Novgorod.⁷¹ Aleksandr then came and reconquered the fortresses that the *Nemtsy* had taken, and went back to Pereyasavl. After hearing of the seizure of Pskov by the *Nemtsy*, Aleksandr took his brother Andrey and a large army from Suzdal to reconquer the city. Once this was successfully accomplished, the *Nemtsy* gathered a large army and turned against Aleksandr. Then came the description of the battle on the ice of Lake Peypus, now much more carefully informed in terms of its historical background than in the previous editions of Aleksandr's *Life*.⁷²

The significance of the Battle on the Ice was highlighted in Vasiliy's edition, not only by leaving some details of the Neva battle out of the narration, following the *Pskov II Chronicle* version of the First Edition, but also by presenting more historical information taken from the chronicles. In addition to this, Vasiliy had still more to give on the basis of his own background. His personal literary taste and the local Pskov view of the newly canonised Aleksandr Nevskiy are particularly apparent in Vasiliy's emotional description of how Aleksandr was moved to tears after hearing of the *Nemtsy* army approaching Pskov. Aleksandr went into the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, hence repeating the model that was originally presented as having taken place before the battle of the Neva, when he prayed in Novgorod before entering the battle. What comes next is an entirely Pskovian view of Aleksandr's actions before the battle:

Aleksandr rose to his feet from prayer and went to the tomb of the saint miracle-worker, Great Prince Vsevolod, his relative, and prayed

⁷¹ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 38–9.

⁷² *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 39–41.

before his tomb, shedding tears and asking for help against the pagan *Nemtsy*.⁷³

Vsevolod-Gavriil was canonised by the Church council in 1549, two years after Aleksandr Nevskiy, and Vasiliy was the author of his *Life*, too. Thus the patron saint of Pskov was familiar to Vasiliy, and apparently he could not keep him out of the *Life* of Aleksandr, since Vsevolod-Gavriil had played such an integral part as a warrior saint protecting the city of Pskov. Vasiliy's edition of Aleksandr's *Life* stresses emphatically that Aleksandr's victory on Lake Peypus was achieved with the help of the Holy Trinity and the prayers of the holy miracle-worker Vsevolod of Pskov, not because of the help of Boris and Gleb, as claimed earlier in the First Edition.⁷⁴ After the triumphant arrival in Pskov, Aleksandr issued his warning to the people of the city not to forget his good deeds.⁷⁵ This oration, which is familiar from the First Edition, also fits in with an integral part of Vasiliy's introduction to the *Life*, his reminder about the importance of remembering the lives of saints, which he showed as being closely connected with the main reason for writing the *Life*, namely to enhance people's wisdom and learning.⁷⁶

Thus the image of Aleksandr as an excellent and courageous warrior whose name was feared in every neighbouring country was based on old hagiographic material, but flavoured with the historical narratives from the local Pskov and Novgorod chronicles. While the first part of Vasiliy's edition was concerned, in the traditional manner, with developing the image of a prince who fearlessly confronted the threat from the *Nemtsy* and the Lithuanians, it added hardly anything profoundly new to the old setting. The embellishments could be seen as logical fillings of historical gaps, points that the old *Life*, written in Vladimir, had not even tried to illuminate. With his knowledge of the chronicles, the local cults and the hagiographic tradition, it was easy for Vasiliy to create a narrative of the *Life* of Aleksandr which fluently enriched the imagination of past events. It is particularly notable that this was done according to a specific Pskovian taste.

⁷³ *Spisok redaktsii Vasilya-Varlaama*, 40.

⁷⁴ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 40–1.

⁷⁵ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 41.

⁷⁶ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 33–4.

Makariy's interest in the saints connected with Pskov may well have originated from the time when he was archbishop of Novgorod and *vладыка* of Pskov, as he was named in the *Pskov I Chronicle*.⁷⁷ During this period he must have spent a lot of his time in Pskov, which had been integrated into the realm of Moscow in 1510. The *Pskov I Chronicle* reports how he came to Pskov in 1536 in order to deal with the matter of the foreign women in the Pskov and Novgorod prisons, and received permission from the Great Princess Elena to convert and release them. After the women had been successfully converted to Orthodox Christianity, they were given in marriage to local Russian men.⁷⁸ The Pskov chronicles describe the Livonian frontier as quite a peaceful area. It was only after 1552 that the first signs of the forthcoming conflict were reported, when the master of Livonia refused to pay Tsar Ivan the taxes he had ordained in 1552.⁷⁹ The first part of the 16th century was in general peaceful on the Livonian frontier, however,⁸⁰ and the edition of Vasil'y was written years before the minor conflict turned into open war in 1558.

As noted previously, there was a tendency for the historical narratives in the Russian medieval chronicles to adopt parts of the hagiographic lives. Thus the events in the chronicles became intermingled with the narratives of the hagiographic lives and the image of Aleksandr as presented in his *Life* became a part of the general historical consciousness. Vasil'y-Varlaam's edition shows for the first time the process of intermingling historical facts taken from the chronicles with hagiographic biography. The literary treatment of the hagiographic *Life* of Aleksandr was basically constructed on information given in the chronicles, but following the structure of the original hagiographic legend, a fact that should be noted carefully. Thus the bipartite structure of Aleksandr's exploits was carefully maintained, the narrative being clearly divided into Aleksandr's martial exploits on the western borders of Novgorod and Pskov and his diplomatic dealings with the Mongol rulers.

Vasil'y's great synthesis of the past identifies relations with the Mongols as Aleksandr Nevskiy's greatest task. The silence that the old *Life* had maintained concerning the Mongol conquest was not

⁷⁷ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 107.

⁷⁸ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 107–8.

⁷⁹ *Pskovskaya tret'ya letopis'*, 234.

⁸⁰ See Angerman 2001, 141–2.

valid any more. Numerous ideological and religious writings had been produced over the intervening period of more than a hundred years, and the violence perpetrated by the Mongols had been widely proclaimed on the pages of the chronicles. The heroic resistance of Russian princes such as Dmitriy Donskoy, standing up openly against their former oppressors and showing moral superiority, had been adopted as a theme in the Russian chronicles well before the time of Ivan IV. Thus Vasiliy was faced in his treatment of the *Life* of Aleksandr with the stiffness of the old narrative, which revealed nothing of the real historical situation of the Mongol conquest, but gave only a few formulaic references to an admiring eastern tsar, Baty, who had heard rumours of the fame of the handsome prince. The whole character of Khan Baty in the First Edition of the *Life* was created only as an indicator of the enormous influence that Aleksandr's physical appearance could achieve. Vasiliy obviously could not write a puzzling *Life* that did not fit into the new consciousness of historical development that had emerged so vigorously during the past few centuries.

In combining the chronicle accounts of the Mongol occupation with the narrative of the hagiographic *Life*, Vasiliy-Varlaam succeeded in depicting the Mongols not only as rude, violent enemies, but also as savagely alien in terms of their religion:

In those times, because of the multiplication of our sins, the Lord God, in His love for mankind, vented His anger upon us and punished us, and thus it happened, that our lands were conquered by foreign, godless pagans, called Tatars. The Tsar Baty from the east came with his numerous army and conquered the whole country, burned our famous cities of Vladimir and Rostov, and killed many Christians. Our Princes Yuriy and Vasilko Vsevolodovich also fell at that time, and all the other princes who were there. Many Russian princes honoured the holy writings, but others, for fear of torment, did as the godless Baty wished and abandoned the living God in order to bow in front of the sun, bushes, fire, and idols.⁸¹

This stark description of the Mongol conquest turns the previously favourable character of Khan Baty into a godless butcher of Christians. As one crucial element in the First Edition of the *Life*—the silent respect shown towards the eastern tsar—was thus profoundly altered, it naturally affected the whole tone of the story. The Mongols were

⁸¹ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 42.

no longer distant figures who gave Aleksandr admiring applause, but were seen as bloody, evil conquerors who stained the Russian lands with blood. Ultimately this also affected the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy. As discussed before, the sacrificial image was raised as an example of an ideal prince during the 15th century, and this provided a model for describing the relationships between the Golden Horde and the Russian princes in the most important princely lives. This development had already given birth to the Second Edition of the *Life*, which had shortened the original storyline of the *Life* considerably, and altered the tone of the narration into a more earthly one. In Vasilii's treatment, however, the sacrificial image of a ruler was adapted to the narrative framework, which nurtured more profoundly the message of the First Edition. Vasilii freely adapted the popular image of the martyred Prince Mikhail of Chernigov as the most important example of Aleksandr's new image, which now turned a totally new page in its development.

Vasilii-Varlaam's treatment of the image of Prince Aleksandr was deeply influenced by the faith of Mikhail of Chernigov, and he gave to Khan Baty characteristics that had belonged originally in the *Life* of Mikhail. Aleksandr's visit to the Horde naturally acquired a totally new tone through Vasilii-Varlaam's treatment. For example, he described Baty's invitation to Aleksandr to appear in the Golden Horde as follows:

In the year 6755 this cursed Tsar Baty again shed human blood and sent his messengers to the city of Suzdal to the blessed Prince Aleksandr saying: 'Many kingdoms and nations bow to me. Are you the only one who does not wish to kneel before me? If you want to save your country, you should come and kneel before me, so that you can see the honour and fame of my realm with your own eyes, as the other Russian princes have knelt before me when they have received their power and great honour from me. I have heard of your bravery and your great stature. If you do not come, I will destroy you and your country, as I destroyed Mikhail of Chernigov and other Russian princes who resisted me and did not submit to my will.'⁸²

After Baty's threatening invitation, Aleksandr says:

It is better that I should die alone for the Orthodox Christian faith before the godless tsar than spill the blood of innocent people and put the whole city in danger.⁸³

⁸² *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 43.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

As we can see, hand-in-hand with the religious aspect borrowed from the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov*, there appears another important aspect of the ideal ruler. The quoted self-sacrificial reference in the edition of Vasilii-Varlaam follows exactly the *Life* of Mikhail Yaroslavich of Tver. What Vasilii actually does in his edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr is to establish a kind of dialogue between the narratives representing the image of the ideal ruler, as he constantly refers to the lives of sacrificial rulers while recounting Aleksandr's visit to the Horde. Aleksandr Nevskiy's image in the edition of Vasilii-Varlaam is a synthesis of the features of the ideal characterisation of a ruler. His piety is like that of Mikhail of Chernigov, and his self-sacrificial attitude in devoting himself to the well-being of his subjects is that of Mikhail of Tver.

Hence the reference to Russian princes who bowed before pagan rites was a reflection from the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov* (*Skazanie ob ubienii v Orde knyazya Mikhaila*), and it was from there that Vasilii drafted a profound new tone into the image of Prince Aleksandr—that of a defender of the faith. The *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov* had recalled the pagan habits of the Mongols in these words:

Baty had the habit that when someone came to pay respect to him, he was not shown in directly, but ordered first, on the instructions of the magicians, to walk through fire and bow in front of the sun, bushes and idols . . . Many princes together with their boyars have done this in order to maintain peace and make their claims to power. Thus they undeniably received the power that they wanted, having been allured by the thought of maintaining peace. In the times when the blessed Prince Mikhail was living in Chernigov, God, after seeing how many allowed themselves to be attracted by the thought of peace, sent His blessing and the gift of the Holy Spirit, and placed the thought in his heart that he should go to the tsar and expose this falsehood which was leading the Christians astray.⁸⁴

Before Mikhail left for the Horde, he was instructed by his spiritual father not to abandon his Christian faith and to refrain from observing pagan rites. 'Stand up fast for the Christian faith,' he advised, 'for it is not appropriate for Christians to bow themselves in front of any created things, but only in front of our Lord God, Jesus

⁸⁴ *Skazanie ob ubienii v Orde knyazya Mikhaila Chernigovskogo i ego boyarina Feodora*, 228, 230.

Christ.' To this Mikhail answered that he was ready even to shed his own blood for Christ and the Christian faith.⁸⁵

Following the narrative of the *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov*, Vasiliy describes how Metropolitan Kirill gave instructions to Aleksandr before his journey not to give up his Christian customs and not to follow the pagan rites, just as Mikhail's spiritual father had done in the *Life of Mikhail*. Vasiliy-Varlaam also described the events in the Horde in the manner of the *Life of Mikhail*, stating that Aleksandr gave a manly answer to Baty's demand to bow to pagan idols, just as Mikhail had done:

It is not befitting to us Christians to walk between fires, nor is it befitting to kneel in front of plants that God has created. Instead we bow to the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, because there is only one God, the Creator of heaven and earth.⁸⁶

As this answer originated from the mouth of a martyr prince who was ready to die for the Orthodox Christian religion, the image of Mikhail then had to be put aside in Aleksandr's case, for there was no conflict of faith in the original story in his *Life*. Thus there is a sharp change in Baty's attitude after Aleksandr refuses to submit to the pagan rites, and his reaction turns to sudden admiration for Aleksandr's dashing physical appearance, which follows the original story of the First Edition.⁸⁷

Issues concerning the Orthodox religion were important in the new lives to be included in Makariy's *Menology*, however, and the matter was a highly complex one, for not only was western Catholic faith to be triumphed over, but the same also applied to the religion of the eastern steppes. Makariy's attitude towards Islam was ardent, and it is sometimes even claimed that he was a militant crusader. Miller believes, for instance, that he was obsessed by the memory of Mongol-Tatar 'Islamic' dominance over Christian Russia.⁸⁸ The many centuries of Mongol domination challenged Makariy to substantiate Moscow's claim to an equally long imperial history for the forefathers of Ivan IV. Miller explains how Makariy found a

⁸⁵ *Skazanie ob ubienii v Orde knyazya Mikhaila Chernigovskogo i ego boyarina Feodora*, 230.

⁸⁶ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 44; cf. *Skazanie ob ubienii v Orde knyazya Mikhaila Chernigovskogo i ego boyarina Feodora*, 230.

⁸⁷ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 44–5.

⁸⁸ Miller 1979, 294.

solution to this dilemma by developing an explanation for the two centuries of Mongol rule which did not detract from his concept of an empire. This explanation lay in the martyrdom of the princes of the Russian lands. In accordance with this notion, Aleksandr Nevskiy was raised up as one example of such a martyr. In Miller's sketch he earned sainthood above all by humiliating himself before the Mongols and by giving his life to save his people, rather than through his victories over the Swedes and the Germans.⁸⁹

Miller's ideas call for some criticism, however. Although Makariy made huge efforts to unite the Russian hagiographic tradition into one single collection, the *Great Menology*, it was not Makariy himself who invented this tradition, for the collection was based on material that had developed in the course of the previous centuries. It was Makariy's activity that framed it into such a united and coherent ideological declaration, but it would be wrong to claim that it was solely an ideological outburst on Makariy's part. The Church of Russia had already begun to articulate an ardent anti-Mongol position from the middle of the 15th century onwards, and it was Metropolitan Iona, the first metropolitan to be appointed by the Russian Church alone, without the blessing of the patriarch of Constantinople, who became a symbol not only of religious independence from Byzantium but also of secular independence from the Mongols. By the time of Metropolitan Makariy, the anti-Mongol ideology already had well-developed roots.⁹⁰

Donald Ostrowski sees the main watershed as occurring when the Church of Russia started to take its first ideological steps against the nomads of the steppes in the fervent years of the 1440s, when the policy of acquiescence on the part of the Church of Moscow ended after the council of Florence-Ferrara, at which the Russian Church rejected the collaboration with the Latin Church that Byzantium had agreed to. Ostrowski argues that from 1252 to 1448 the Russian Church took up a position of accepting dominance by the khans as the will of God, in accordance with the fact that the Byzantine emperor was then in alliance with the Qipchaq khanate.⁹¹ According to this view, by retreating from the policy of the Byzantine Church, the Church of Moscow was also divorcing itself from the policy of

⁸⁹ Miller 1979, 297.

⁹⁰ See Ostrowski 1998, 23, 138–41, 164–247.

⁹¹ Ostrowski 1998, 144–5.

collaboration with the Qipchaq khanate which the Church of Constantinople had favoured. After 1448 this ambivalence culminated in outright animosity towards the steppes, and from that time onwards the churchmen in Moscow were apt to vilify the Mongols and portray them as 'the enemy'.⁹²

To illuminate the official ideology of Makariy's literary framework, the important ideological changes that took place in Russia after the 1440s have to be taken into consideration, namely the Church council of Florence-Ferrara and the separation of the Russian Church from that of Byzantium. According to Ostrowski, the most important aspects of the new ideology of the Church in Moscow were as follows: firstly, the replacement of the Byzantine emperor as the protector of the Church by the current ruler of Moscow. Secondly, definition of the authority of the ruler of Moscow in the same terms as had applied to the Byzantine emperor. Thirdly, the creation of an imagined past that designated Moscow as the true successor of Kievan Russia as well as of Byzantium. This new imagined past served to deny Moscow's status as a successor of the Mongol khanate, and set up an interpretative framework in which to 'explain' the relations between the Mongols and the Russian princes.⁹³

One of the arguments for Ostrowski's theory of an alliance between Russia and the Qipchaq khanate up to 1448 was his claim that anti-Mongol material first appeared only in the *Nikon Chronicle*. Ostrowski's claim was based on the *Nikon Chronicle's* description of the events explaining the Mongol raid of 1252, when Aleksandr's brother Andrey was forced to flee the Mongol army:

That year Khan Sartak sent his warlord Nevruy, Prince Katyak and Prince Alybug with Tatar troops against Prince Andrey Yaroslavich of Suzdal. Tatars came to Pereyasavl on the eve of St Boris's day, and in the morning the Great Prince Andrey Yaroslavich of Suzdal exclaimed: 'Oh Lord! For how long do we have to fight among ourselves and sacrifice one another to the Tatars! It is better for me to flee to a foreign country than to make friends with the Tatars and submit to them.'⁹⁴

Andrey had been presented earlier in the chronicles as a prince who did not want to submit voluntarily to Mongol control, and his

⁹² Ostrowski 1998, 138–41.

⁹³ Ostrowski 1998, 142–3.

⁹⁴ *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 10, 138.

sentimental speech condemning the internal feuds among the Russian princes had already been reported in the *Nikon Chronicle*, which was compiled in Moscow under the supervision of the metropolitan in the 1520s. It was a huge compilation which consisted of material from a wide range of sources, including earlier chronicles, tales, hagiographic lives of saints and archival documents. Its main sources were the *Simeonov* and *Iosafovskaya* chronicles and the *Sofiyskiy Khronograf* from Novgorod.⁹⁵ One should also note here that the *Nikon Chronicle* went through major editorial work throughout the 16th century. First created in the late 1520s, it was then edited under Metropolitan Daniil (1522–39) during the reign of Vasiliy III. In the late 1550s Daniil's edition was combined with material from other chronicles, and it was the resulting edition that enjoyed wide popularity among church leaders and was used as a major source for the *Book of Degrees* in the early 1560s.⁹⁶

Ostrowski interpreted the words of Andrey Yaroslavich as the first example of a changed attitude towards the steppes. It has already been observed how the devastation wrought by Nevruy was described in the Novgorod chronicles of the 15th century, and the *Nikon Chronicle* used the narratives of these descriptions, but made an addition in that it reported Andrey as making a humble prayer to God before his escape from the khan's anger.⁹⁷ It was the fifteenth-century all-Russian chronicles, however, that gave the first hints of new attitudes towards Baty and the Mongols. Sharper tones were adopted towards the Mongol conquerors by the fifteenth-century chronicles, and the constant change in the image of the Mongols, towards more straightforward condemnation, took place during the era of Metropolitan Makariy and Tsar Ivan IV.

The notion of Aleksandr's voluntary submission and personal sacrifice had already been put forward in the most important fifteenth-century chronicles. The *Sophia I Chronicle* had presented Aleksandr's role according to the view of the Second Edition, which to a significant extent elevated the role of the father and son as sufferers. The *Simeonov Chronicle* also emphasised Aleksandr's role as a voluntary sufferer in one short sentence connected to its laconic funeral description:

⁹⁵ The *Sofiyskiy Khronograf* has survived in one sixteenth-century manuscript. See Tvorogov, *Khronograf Sofiyskiy* 1989, 505–6.

⁹⁶ Kloss, *Letopis' Nikonovskaya* 1989, 49–50.

⁹⁷ *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 10, 138.

‘Aleksandr died after having shown great manliness in war and having struggled with the pagan Tatars on behalf of the Christians.’⁹⁸ Since nothing in the chronicle description itself gives any information on Aleksandr really having struggled with the Mongols, the notion was apparently well-established as part of Aleksandr’s image, since it appeared so indisputably in the funeral descriptions contained in the fifteenth-century chronicles.

Nothing is said in Vasiliy-Varlaam’s edition about the expulsion of Andrey. Aleksandr’s visit to the Horde was described by mixing elements from several sources. First his Orthodox attitude towards the pagan rites was thoroughly presented according to the model of Mikhail of Chernigov. After Aleksandr’s stern denial, the ‘godless’ Khan Baty showed his admiration for Aleksandr’s manly appearance, and is described as sending Aleksandr, together with his brother Andrey, to Kanovich. Baty himself then went to the lands of the Bolgars, where he is described as being killed by their king, Vladislav. After Baty’s death Aleksandr is depicted as returning to gather the Christians back to their homes, with no references to the raid by Nevruy or the expulsion of Andrey.⁹⁹

Vasiliy obviously carefully avoided touching on the delicate spot in the image of Aleksandr as a good ruler, namely the fate of his younger brother Andrey, who had to suffer because of his resistance to the Mongols. As Aleksandr himself had been given the role of being set against the godless Mongols, the reference to Andrey’s expulsion was left out of Vasiliy-Varlaam’s treatment. The complex relationship between Aleksandr and Andrey was to be given a proper solution very soon, however, in the next great edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr, in which Andrey was made a warning example of a mis-cast ruler.

⁹⁸ *Simeonovskaya letopis’*, 72.

⁹⁹ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 45.

2. ORDERING THE IMPERIAL HISTORY OF THE MOSCOW TSARS

2.1. *The sacrificial image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the Book of Degrees*

In previous chapters the focus was on observing a tendency to arrange historical narratives in a way which corresponded to the contemporary notion of order. In the *Great Menology* everything that was valuable to the soul was written down according to the dates in the Church calendar on which it was to be read, while the great Moscow chronicles of the 16th century, the *Nikon* and *Voskresenskaya* chronicles, presented the narratives of the past as an unceasing chain of historical events continuing up to the present, following the old chronicle tradition of constant compilation. The *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was adopted into the Moscow chronicles as well, just as it had consolidated its place in the Novgorodian chronicles a century earlier, divided into yearly accounts from the battle of the Neva onwards.¹

The largest and most far-reaching literary process to be embarked upon by Metropolitan Makariy was a collection of historical narratives centred around a genealogical presentation of the tsars of Moscow and their forefathers. The imperial lineage of the tsar became solemnly manifested in the *Book of Degrees of the Imperial Genealogy* (*Kniga stepennaya tsarskogo rodosloviya*). This huge collection of well-ordered texts is often linked to Metropolitan Makariy and his devotion to providing the line of Russian tsars with a history, as a fruit of the same intellectual heritage, an outcome of his devotion to the production of didactic chronicles. Just as the commitment of the chronicles to past tradition must be realised,² it also has to be acknowledged that both the *Great Menology* and the *Book of Degrees* were committed to the old, traditional ways of presenting the past. The fundamental difference was, however, that they were organised differently from the chronicles. The *Great Menology* was a compilation of liturgical texts organ-

¹ See *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 10, 118–43; *Voskresenskaya letopis'*, 146–64.

² Both the *Voskresenskaya* and *Nikon* chronicles originated even before Makariy's time, although they were constantly edited and developed during his time. See Kloss, *Letopis' Nikonovskaya* 1989, 49–50; Levina 1989, 39–41.

ised according to the Church calendar, and the *Book of Degrees* concentrated on the genealogy of Ivan's forefathers, each representative of the princely Rurikid dynasty. The originality of the *Book of Degrees* lay ultimately in its ordering of things. It consisted only of texts which were of importance in presenting a history of Russian tsardom, uniting the holy saints of Russia to generations of its pious rulers.

The focus of the *Book of Degrees* was on the historical roots of Russian tsardom, concentrated in Moscow. It derived the mythological past of the Rurikovichi from the Roman emperor Augustus, with whom the mythical *varyag* Rurik had family ties. From Rurik, the *Book of Degrees* moved to the adoption of the Christian religion by the Rurikid princes of Kiev. The Christian history proper of the Rurikid rulers was divided into 17 generations of great princes, starting from Prince Vladimir, who was the first Christian ruler of Kiev. Through generations of successors, the power of the great princes was passed on from Kiev to Vladimir, and eventually from Vladimir to Moscow. Symbolically, the *Book of Degrees* signified the chain of generations in terms of steps towards God. With its organised and balanced order, it surrounded the historical narratives of each generation of great princes with the lives of metropolitans and saints, containing a large amount of hagiographic material on other noteworthy contemporaries, such as the lives of distinguished princes and pious clerics and monks. It developed into an apotheosis of the Moscow autocracy, representing the religious and secular power as linked together through the lineage of the great princes of Moscow.³

This view of history totally ignored similar claims of other Rurikid princes to hereditary power derived from the Kiev princes, and instead aimed to build up a history of Russia by means of a genealogical line that claimed a continuous tradition of sovereignty for Moscow. It is the most sophisticated historical representation of sixteenth-century Moscow, and exploits the origins of political organisation and Christianity among the eastern Slavs in Kiev, proceeding through Vladimir to Moscow.⁴

The introduction to the *Book of Degrees* tells us about its content:

This is the book of degrees of the imperial genealogy of the enlightened sceptre-holders ordained by God to rule the Russian land in

³ Serov 1996, 210–11.

⁴ Ibid.; Miller 1979, 325.

piety; who, like the groves of paradise planted by the springs of water, were from God, watered by Orthodoxy and allowed to grow in wisdom and grace; who were illuminated by the divine glory as a garden is made to bloom and is embellished with foliage and beautiful flowers, being bountiful in ripe fruit and full of fragrance, great and tall; who, productive of many progeny, spread their wondrous branches wide and were exalted for their virtues that were pleasing to God. And many of them, from the roots to the branches, with manifold efforts, like golden steps, erected a rising, unfaltering staircase to heaven, by which to ascend humbly to God and live with Him.⁵

The *Book* then explains how Great Princess Olga, wife of Igor Rurikovich and 'co-equal with the apostles', was the first of the pious family to accept a Christian baptism, and how her blessed grandson Prince Vladimir, also co-equal with the apostles, laid the foundation for this glorious staircase to heaven represented by 'his pious descendants' in their 'flourishing rule'. The virtues of these pious rulers are 'more numerous than grains of sand', including both monastic virtues, such as chastity and moderation, and military virtues, such as martyrdom for Christ and bravery in war.⁶

Makariy's concepts of sovereignty and imperial dignity, as formulated in a whole series of literary works, were based on old models already reflected in the coronation ceremony of Ivan IV in 1547.⁷ During this ceremony, Ivan stood before the metropolitan and announced that all his ancestors were great princes of Vladimir, Novgorod, Moscow and All Russia and that he, too, wished to be recognised as such. Metropolitan Makariy then recognised his claim, crowned him 'with our ancient titles', blessed him with the cross, and seated him on the throne. After that Ivan again addressed Makariy, claiming that in addition he wanted to be crowned tsar according to the ancient custom. After the official vestments and regalia had been given to Ivan, the metropolitan lectured the newly crowned tsar on the role of the Church in his elevation and on the holy character of his office. His instructions carefully underlined the co-equal powers of the tsar and the Church. Ivan received his impe-

⁵ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 5.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ There exist several sources describing the coronation, of which three have been printed. In all likelihood the closest to the original text is that edited by E. V. Barsov, which was taken from the manuscript prepared shortly after the coronation in 1547. The content of the coronation description edited by Barsov is described in Miller's article. See Barsov 1883, 39–66; Miller 1967, 559.

rial crown with the blessing of God, the Mother of God, the Russian saints (headed by Metropolitan Peter), and his late father 'your unforgettable holy father Great Prince Vasiliy Ivanovich, autocrat of All Russia'.⁸

Makariy evinced a conviction that the coronation ceremony affirmed the longstanding imperial rights of Ivan's ancestors. Illustrative of their major role was the detail in the coronation rite by which Ivan paid reverence at the tombs of his ancestors in the Church of the Archangel.⁹ In this emphasis on the holy roots of tsardom existing in Moscow, Ivan's ancestors were invoked in an overwhelming effort to underline his claims as an indisputable and respected ruler. This was considerably elaborated in the *Book of Degrees*.

It is often claimed that the *Book of Degrees* was an outcome of the same ideological context which was demonstrated in the compilation of the *Great Menology* and, as such, reflects the powerful role played by Makariy in compiling it. The writing of the *Book of Degrees* was started in 1560 and finished in 1563. Makariy died on 31 December 1563, and it has been suggested that the work must have been completed, if not by the gravely ill, ageing metropolitan himself, at least on his orders. Given its stylistic unity, it has been argued that it must have been edited by a single person, who was responsible for the result.¹⁰ Despite the high esteem accorded to Metropolitan Makariy throughout the book, however, there is no direct indication as to its author and no direct references to Metropolitan Makariy having written or edited it.¹¹

The opening words of the first degree, presenting the rule of Prince Vladimir, make reference to Metropolitan Makariy's orders to collect all the scattered material about the baptiser of the Russian lands from the chronicles, hagiographic writings and eulogies into one source 'during the rule of the God-crowned tsar, Great Prince Ivan Vasilevich, lord and autocrat of the whole of Russia, who shows the seventeenth step from the blessed Vladimir, and the twentieth from Ryurik'.¹² The *Life* of Vladimir given in the *Book* is probably the result of a hagiographic compilation process that took place between

⁸ Barsov 1883, 56; see Miller 1967, 562–3.

⁹ Barsov 1883, 65–6. See Miller 1967, 564.

¹⁰ Vasenko 1904, 170–2.

¹¹ Vasenko 1904, 180–8.

¹² *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 58.

1547 and 1549, and the reference to Makariy on this occasion cannot be considered to directly denote the authorship. His role must be seen above all as the organiser of the writing process.

In 1904, P. G. Vasenko examined three possible candidates for the authorship of the *Book of Degrees*: a priest by the name of Sylvester; the monk Vasilii-Varlaam in Pskov, and Makariy's successor, Metropolitan Afanasiy. Sylvester was a priest at the Cathedral of the Annunciation (*Blagoveshchenskiy sobor*) in the Moscow Kremlin, and was specifically named as the author of the *Life* of Olga in one of the manuscripts of the *Book of Degrees*. He had a prominent position in the inner circle of Ivan's political advisors in the early part of his reign. However, Vasenko did not think it was possible that Sylvester, who had been disgraced in the early 1560s and exiled to a monastery, could have written the *Book of Degrees* during his period of exile.¹³

In view of his known authorship of the long *Life of Prince Vsevolod-Gavriil of Pskov*, Vasilii-Varlaam has also been suggested as an author of the *Book of Degrees*,¹⁴ and more specifically of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in that book,¹⁵ but not convincingly enough to establish his authorship of the whole work.¹⁶ Eventually Vasenko came to the conclusion that the *Book of Degrees* was compiled on the orders of Metropolitan Makariy by Makariy's successor Afanasiy,¹⁷ a view that has since become widely accepted.¹⁸

Afanasiy came to Moscow from Pereyaslavl-Zaleskii in 1549/50, and was spiritual confessor (*dukhovnyi otets*) to Ivan IV. He had a prominent place in Ivan's retinue, and is often mentioned in the tsar's personal chronicles. Because of his position in the tsar's service in Moscow, it is obvious that Afanasiy would have been very closely associated with Metropolitan Makariy and could very well have been a member of the latter's literary circle. One manuscript of the *Book of Degrees*, originating from the Chudov monastery, even mentions Afanasiy, metropolitan of All Russia, as a compiler of the book.¹⁹

¹³ Vasenko 1904, 191–4.

¹⁴ See especially Derzhavin 1902, 24, 77–87.

¹⁵ Okhotnikova 1987, 361.

¹⁶ Vasenko pointed out that the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in the *Book of Degrees* did not resemble the redaction we know that Vasilii-Varlaam wrote, and that excluded Vasilii-Varlaam from the candidates for authorship. Vasenko 1904, 191–8.

¹⁷ Vasenko 1904, 180–217.

¹⁸ See Serov 1996, 210–11; Pokrovskiy 1988, 73–9.

¹⁹ Vasenko 1904, 199.

Another link to Afanasiy's role in the process of writing the *Book of Degrees* is revealed in the story about the miracle that occurred at Aleksandr Nevskiy's grave, reported in the 15th generation in the *Book of Degrees*, the generation of Great Prince Ivan III. Chapter 21 of this generation has the title 'Of the appearance in the air of the holy Great Prince Aleksandr Nevskiy and of the fire'.²⁰ The passage tells of a vision which was seen in the monastery where Aleksandr was buried, and speaks of the fire that broke out in the city of Vladimir, from which Aleksandr's relics were miraculously saved. At the end of this short description the author comes back to his own days and describes a miraculous healing which happened to him personally during the reign of Ivan III's grandson, Ivan IV, 'our honourable and great prince Ivan Vasilevich, tsar and autocrat of Russia, Kazan and Astrakhan'.²¹ When Ivan IV was proceeding to the conquest of Kazan, the tsar and his retinue made a stop in Vladimir and took part in a service in the church where Aleksandr Nevskiy was buried. During the service the arm of the author (who does not reveal his identity, but who no doubt belonged among Ivan's troops) was miraculously healed while he was standing near the relics of Aleksandr Nevskiy.²²

The same story of miraculous healing is also told in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* as written by Iona Dumin in 1591, and in the extended edition of the *Nikon Chronicle* and two editions of the *Voskresenskaya Chronicle*.²³ In the extended edition of the *Nikon Chronicle* the author reveals himself as the 'sinful Afanasiy'.²⁴ Vasenko argued that this was proof of the involvement of the same Afanasiy in the writing of the *Book of Degrees*, maintaining that he deliberately did not mention his own name in the description of the miracle in the *Book of Degrees*, thus fulfilling the obligatory modesty of authorship, which according to medieval practice meant that the author was to remain anonymous.²⁵

Vasenko also drew attention to the familiarity of the author of the *Book of Degrees* with the lives of the saints of the Pereyaslavl

²⁰ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:2, 569.

²¹ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:2, 569–570.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 106. See Vasenko 1904, 202–3.

²⁴ *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 12, 230.

²⁵ Vasenko 1904, 203–4.

region,²⁶ concluding that since it was well known that Afanasiy—then known by his original earthly name of Andrey—had participated in Ivan's conquest of Kazan and hailed from Pereyaslavl, his identity fitted well with the reference to Afanasiy's authorship made in the Chudov manuscript of the *Book of Degrees*. Vasenko concluded that this Andrey, who was known as Afanasiy after taking his vows as a monk in 1562, and who was consecrated as metropolitan of All Russia in 1564, was the author of the *Book of Degrees*.²⁷

However, Vasenko's arguments are basically based on speculation. As Mansikka has pointed out, there is an inconsistency in the report of the miracle in the *Book of Degrees*, as it was assigned only to the 15th generation, that of Vasiliy III, but left out of the eighth and 17th generations, those of Aleksandr Nevskiy and Ivan IV. Mansikka noted that although Vasenko's hypothesis of Afanasiy's participation in the *Book of Degrees* was tenable, the unity of description was not sufficient to guarantee that the whole book had been written by a single person. Thus Mansikka preferred to leave open the identity of the writer of the edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in the *Book of Degrees*.²⁸

One has to wonder at the weight given to the miracle at the relics of Aleksandr Nevskiy during the Kazan expedition of 1552 as evidence of the authorship of the whole *Book of Degrees*, especially since it is well known that the medieval way of writing allowed the writers of large compilations to freely adopt the texts of previous writers and to interpolate paragraphs. The eyewitness account in question was inserted into several later compilations, including the edition of the *Life of Aleksandr* written by Iona Dumin in 1591, which also faithfully repeated the author's being there.²⁹ The medieval manner of copying a text obviously had a tendency to retain the important claim of *autopsia*, the claim to personal experience which was an important *topos* affirming the truthfulness of events. An eyewitness account was of great value, and the copyists carefully avoided losing the claim to authenticity, no matter whether the story was being re-used or repeated by a different scribe. This was obviously the case with the description of the miracle of the healed hand in the *Life of*

²⁶ Vasenko 1904, 204–11.

²⁷ Vasenko 1904, 211–17.

²⁸ Mansikka (1913) 1984, 163–5.

²⁹ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 106.

Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees*, so it cannot be considered to provide any evidence of the identity of its author, who could also have been a mere copyist.

Although the direct line of inheritance of the throne of Moscow was established in the *Book of Degrees*, the *Book* also made extensive use of other hagiographic material, showing sympathy for other members of the Ryurikovichs, such as the martyred princes of Tver and Mikhail of Chernigov. According to N. N. Pokrovskiy, the purpose of the *Book of Degrees* was to strengthen the position of the Church of Russia in its relation to the tsar. The tsar was to be the protector of the Church, but not a secular leader of it.³⁰ The attempt to strengthen the Church's position by demonstrating the lineage of pious tsars as protectors of the Church was a task that ultimately failed deplorably. While the *Book of Degrees* was still being completed, Tsar Ivan was already making plans to establish his reign of terror through his *oprichnina*, which finally took place in 1565. Many leading clerics were exiled, including Sylvester, and, eventually, the *Book* was used to claim the tsar's status as secular head of the Church.³¹

Since the *Book* introduced its reader to 17 representatives of pious rulers, it is obvious that the characters described in its pages were presented in highly idealised contexts. This was a perfect arena for combining ideal characterisations of rulers with their historical contexts, and each generation described not only a ruler, but also an era. Ultimately, the *Book of Degrees* must be considered as an offspring of the tradition of the medieval chronicles, providing a multi-layered view of the past. Just as the first *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was concerned above all with the demands made on a just ruler, so the version of the *Life* that was incorporated into the *Book of Degrees* was a tool for presenting the decisive moral values of its own era. The Mongol conquest and Aleksandr's attitude towards his subjects were the two basic elements with which the latter was concerned.

The important feature that Vasilii-Varlaam had adopted in his edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr—the use of extensive chronicle material to fill the historical gaps in earlier versions—was also characteristic throughout of the princely lives presented in the *Book of Degrees*. The *Book* thereby confessed its legacy from the medieval chronicles,

³⁰ Pokrovskiy 1988, 73–9.

³¹ Ibid.

as it brought together elaborate princely biographies of pious descendants of Great Princess Olga and her grandson, Prince Vladimir. But a comparison of the edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* written by Vasiliy-Varlaam of Pskov in the late 1540s or early 1550s with what appeared to be the official *Life* a decade later, in the *Book of Degrees*, reveals much about the needs of those who were responsible for writing the history of the imperial lineage of the tsars of Moscow.

Aleksandr was a representative of the eighth generation after Prince Vladimir, the eighth step towards the tsardom of Ivan IV, who himself represented the 17th step. The *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was the only individual biography in his degree,³² largely because the important events of the Mongol conquest and the significant and elaborate *Life of Mikhail of Chernigov* had been placed in the seventh degree, representing the generation of Aleksandr's father, Yaroslav Vsevolodovich.³³

All the emphasis which might be considered to derive from Pskov has been put aside from the *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees*. There is no mention of Aleksandr visiting the tomb of Vsevolod-Gavriil in Pskov, nor of the help received by Aleksandr from the Holy Trinity or Prince Vsevolod-Gavriil, patrons of Pskov, during the Battle on the Ice. Aleksandr's oration to the people of Pskov is also left aside. Likewise, where Vasiliy had presented Aleksandr's battle at the River Neva in a manner that followed the *Pskov II Chronicle*, the version in the *Book of Degrees* followed the pattern of the First Edition, combined with the accounts in the Novgorod chronicles and some material from the *Nikon Chronicle*.³⁴

The features that Vasiliy had added to Aleksandr's image, e.g. his likeness to Mikhail of Chernigov, were no longer used in the *Book of Degrees*. Instead, features such as an emphasis on Aleksandr's father, Prince Yaroslav, were given greater prominence. This is quite understandable, since Aleksandr Nevskiy was seen above all as a member of the chain of princely ancestors. Thus the structure and overtones of the narration were entirely different from those found in Vasiliy's treatment. Vasiliy's edition of the *Life* was clearly divided into two parts, the first solely concerning Aleksandr's martial exploits and the second showing his attitude towards the Mongols, which was largely

³² *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 279–95.

³³ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 251–78.

³⁴ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 284–6.

developed according to the image of Mikhail of Chernigov as a voluntary sufferer.

The introduction to the *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees* already reveals the new emphasis present in Aleksandr's image. In his opening words, Vasilii had stressed the importance of writing down the deeds of pious men as tools of Christian education for all people, and he was concerned more generally with the educational significance of hagiographic writings.³⁵ The *Book of Degrees*, however, was a coherent compilation of the lives of pious rulers accompanied by lives of saints. Thus the *Life* of Aleksandr had a different context and a different character. The most obvious difference is that, from beginning to end, it is the Mongol conquest which dominates the narrative of the *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees*. The conquest began during the seventh generation, during the reign of Yuri Vsevolodovich, Aleksandr's uncle, and the eighth generation was seen as a direct continuation of the tragic events that had taken place in Russia in the previous degree.

Thus, the author of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in the *Book of Degrees* rushes to underline Aleksandr's significant resemblance to his father.³⁶ The emphasis on the self-sacrificial examples of Aleksandr and his father was similar to the image very significantly brought up in the Second Edition of the *Life*. Despite possessing the virtues of a courageous and victorious soldier, Aleksandr was very meek and followed in everything the footsteps of his father Yaroslav, whom God loved. He gave his relatives large amounts of gold and silver, and went to meet Khan Baty to plead for the imprisoned Russians. Eventually he delivered them from the hands of the godless Tatars, liberating them from cruel forced labour and many pains and dangers.³⁷

He was most merciful, just like his father Yaroslav, who was protected by God, and he followed his father's paths in everything, in providing much gold and silver for the freeing of captives, in going to Khan Baty in the Horde for the sake of the Russians whom the godless Tatars had imprisoned, and in liberating them from desolate labour and from many hardships and dangers. He was himself protected by God, and he always won victory over his enemies. Thus God showed

³⁵ *Spisok redaktsii Vasil'ya-Varlaama*, 33–4.

³⁶ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 280.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

him His mercy, and he was dreadful and stern (*strashen' i grozen'*) towards his opponents and his name was feared everywhere.³⁸

Although a meek and good ruler of his subjects, Aleksandr was described as a horrifying opponent to his enemies. Here the image of a just and merciful ruler confronts the demands of respect and authority. In the medieval concept, the hierarchy of the universe was crowned by God, the tsar was a living icon of God on earth, and subjects were supposed to serve their tsar with humility. Also, fear of and respect for everyone superior to oneself in the social hierarchy was essential for maintaining harmony in society.³⁹

The key virtue for an ideal ruler, however, was justice. A true leader was at the same time awesome and merciful. The concepts of *groza* (a many-sided term difficult to translate exactly, with meanings of stern, authoritative or even awesome firmness) and justice were very important for the idea of a tsar's power. Even after Ivan's coronation in 1547, politicians and ideologists in Moscow took a series of measures to promote the tsar's prestige. According to Sergey Bogatyrev, the conquest of Kazan in 1552 played a key role in developing the ideas of Ivan as an ideal ruler, since the khan of Kazan was also regarded as a tsar by his subjects.⁴⁰ In the *History of Kazan* Ivan IV is portrayed as a wise and Orthodox tsar and autocrat who has a combination of the virtues of *groza* and meekness.⁴¹ The story culminates with an extensive panegyric, and illustrates vividly how the ideologists of Moscow worked actively on the concept of auto-

³⁸ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 280. This characterisation of Aleksandr's dreadful and stern image was later transferred to the *Nikon Chronicle*. See *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 10, 119.

³⁹ The qualities of a good ruler were featured in, among others, the works of Joseph of Volok (died 1515), who used in his writings the Slavonic translation of the Greek Agapetus. Agapetus's works deal in general terms with the moral, religious and political duty of a ruler. They were translated into Latin, French, and German, and were widely commented on by the humanists of the Renaissance. In his epistle to the great prince of Moscow Joseph employed quotations from Agapetus about the dual nature of the tsar: 'By his nature, the tsar is like a man, but by his power he is like almighty God.' As Josephism became the ideological stimulus of the tsardom of Moscow, these ideas had wide influence. However, it is hardly likely that the Byzantine doctrine of the sacred autocracy of the ruler was adopted before the rulers of Moscow eventually established their sacral position as tsar during the 16th century. Shahan, 1907. *Poslaniya Iosifa Volotskogo*, 184; Bogatyrev 2000, 59–60; Fedotov, vol. I, 1966, 397–8. See also Lehtovirta 1999, 130–8.

⁴⁰ Bogatyrev 2000, 66.

⁴¹ *Kazanskaya istoriya*, 562–4.

cratic power.⁴² The image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the *Book of Degrees* also followed these features, which were nurtured during the time of Ivan IV. This was an era of establishing new images to highlight the prestige of the great prince of Moscow, now crowned as tsar and autocrat of All Russia.

As previously noted, the chronicles contained more information on the details of Nevruy's excursion to plunder the lands of Russia than the First Edition of the *Life* had ever hinted at. As the chronicles adopted a more and more openly hostile attitude towards the Mongols in the 15th century, the fate of Prince Andrey became an integral part of the presentation of the Russian princes' relationships with the Golden Horde. Prince Andrey Yaroslavich and his unsuccessful politics towards the Mongols were now treated as a part of the *Life* of Aleksandr in a manner that promoted the image of a good ruler by giving an example of the opposite. Vasilii-Varlaam had left Andrey out of his edition of the *Life*, but in the *Book of Degrees* Andrey's image was now interpreted with much more depth. It offered an explanation for his failure as a ruler, claiming that the Mongol raid was blamed on Andrey himself, as it was a punishment from God for his poor government:

That year the Great Prince Aleksandr went to the Horde to meet the new khan, Sartak, who had given the famous city of Vladimir and the whole land of Suzdal to his brother Andrey. Although he was noble and brave, Andrey did not take care of the government, and spent more time hunting wild animals together with his young advisors. Because of this many things became worse, the people became poorer and suffered much harm, and because of him God intervened.⁴³

Starting from the 14th century, Moscow had gained dominion over huge territories, and in order to control and rule such an extensive and varied country the great princes of Moscow developed an establishment of power which is generally referred to as an autocracy. This was a complex system which ought not to be reduced to the person of the ruler alone. A close circle of counsellors played a highly important role in the political and court life of sixteenth-century Moscow and, according to Bogatyrev, the image of these loyal counsellors was an essential part of the myth of Russian tsardom. The

⁴² Bogatyrev 2000, 66–7.

⁴³ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 289; also *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 10, 138.

Life of Great Prince Dmitriy had already illustrated how the boyars were the indispensable companions and aides of the prince.⁴⁴

In this respect, the image of the unsuccessful Andrey Yaroslavich was essential as a warning to a ruler against evil counsellors. Fedotov sees in the condemnation of Andrey a changing attitude to the role of the ruler since the times of the early princes of Kiev. The lonely rider, the vigorous prince exhibiting strength and skills in the hunt, was no good as an image for a prince of Moscow chained to administrative duties.⁴⁵ In fact the author of the *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees* used the age-old motif of a bad ruler inherited from the Middle Ages. The famous French troubadour Bertrand de Born (in his *sirventes*, written in 1205) had blamed John, the younger brother of Richard the Lionheart, for his bad governance of the state, as he had abandoned his subjects in order to spend his time hunting and fishing rather than in governing his country—which in Bertrand's view meant mostly warfare. As the opposite of John's bad government, Bertrand applauded the good rule of his elder brother, Richard.⁴⁶ Likewise, in the *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees*, the bad rulership of the younger brother was created in order to highlight the good rule of the elder brother, Aleksandr.

The image of Andrey surrounded by young, foolish counsellors was obviously a stereotypical warning against the vices that might attract a ruler. This is clearly something new that developed in the clerical circles of Moscow as the *Book of Degrees* set about formulating a new idea of the perfect ruler, and the explanation of God's anger towards Prince Andrey fitted in with this perfectly. The story of Andrey in Aleksandr's *Life* in the *Book of Degrees* underlined two major things that the clerics wanted to remind the tsar to consider in his task as a ruler: it warned him against evil counsellors, and it described precisely what were the characteristics of a bad ruler.

The same was in fact proclaimed more boldly in the solemn epilogue to the *History of Kazan*, in which Tsar Ivan IV was depicted with many of the old characteristics of a ruler, already familiar from the days of Kiev, although a new emphasis could also be found. While the old ideal was preserved in boasting both of Ivan's great reconstruction work as a builder of new and old towns, and of his

⁴⁴ Bogatyrev 2000, 48–50. See Halperin 1979, 76, 80.

⁴⁵ Fedotov, vol. II, 1966, 164–5.

⁴⁶ See Klein 1971, 103–4.

role as a protector of the Church and its monasteries, it also highlighted the new, dogmatic intolerance he had shown. Thus the author of the *History of Kazan* praised what he regarded as the virtuous restriction of frivolous idleness, producing a long list of things to which Tsar Ivan did not pay any attention, including the hunting of wildfowl, dog-handling, and cock-fighting. He also disliked music, the *gusli* and the violin, and he did not enjoy the antics of jesters (*skomorokhi*). Instead, he dedicated himself to the art of warfare, and he loved and paid tribute to his good cavalryman and his brave gunmen (*streltsy*). The author claimed that 'for his whole life he consulted with his wise counsellors, and dedicated himself to liberating his country from the conquest of pagans'⁴⁷—an image of a warrior prince which no doubt would also have pleased Bertrand de Born. In this respect, the image of the virtuous Ivan surrounded by good advisors was quite the opposite of the warning image of Andrey, younger brother of Aleksandr Nevskiy.

Although the image of a good ruler was obviously a major focus of attention in the *Book of Degrees*, the characterisation of Aleksandr was undergoing a great change, and the historical setting of his heroic exploits had also altered considerably. The earlier seventh degree assumed the enormous importance of Russia's relationship with the steppes, as it contained a huge body of historical narratives of heroic princes of Vladimir, the battle of Kalka, the conquest of territory by Khan Baty, and the sack of Vladimir. Hence the tone of the whole seventh degree was sad, even desperate. The martyrdom of Mikhail of Chernigov acquired a position as a significant ideal, and his long and elaborate *Life* formed the central single hagiographic writing in the seventh degree.⁴⁸ A significant characterisation of Prince Yaroslav was also given, presenting an image of him as another self-sacrificial prince, as derived from the Second Edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr.⁴⁹

Since the texts used in the presentation of the seventh degree were carefully selected, ordered and edited, it may be assumed that the author had a wide body of material available, which he skilfully combined into a cohesive, balanced and well-ordered historical narrative. He used the old characterisation from the chronicles in the case

⁴⁷ *Kazanskaya istoriya*, 562.

⁴⁸ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 267–77.

⁴⁹ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 253–5.

of Yaroslav (who did not take part in the fight against the Mongols during the tragic events of 1237–8 in Vladimir), referring to him as a prince who enjoyed God's protection, having been safe in Novgorod when the ruinous Mongol conquest occurred.⁵⁰ After the eventful and tragic seventh degree, there was not much left to represent in the eighth degree corresponding to Aleksandr Nevskiy, and his *Life* formed the sole item.⁵¹

Thus the fatal Mongol conquest dominated Aleksandr Nevskiy's degree from the beginning, because of its context in previous events. A reference to Baty's conquest had already been made in the introductory part of the *Life*, which totally changed the atmosphere of the whole description. The fact that Aleksandr and his father Yaroslav were ruling in Novgorod at the time of the conquest was highlighted, and the *Life* in the *Book of Degrees* explained that the conquest did not reach that city, where Aleksandr and his father were fighting heroically against the *Nemtsy* and the Lithuanians.⁵² Thus the attack by the Roman king that was countered at the River Neva acquired a much more fateful emphasis, since the *Book of Degrees* combined information on the Mongol conquest with the events of the hagiographic *Life* of Aleksandr, which had earlier been treated separately. The author showed considerable interest in Aleksandr's relationship with the Mongols, and the same chronological treatment from the *Book of Degrees* was adopted in the later editions of the *Nikon Chronicle*.⁵³

Then, in the year 6745, it was heard everywhere that the godless Baty had caused much harm to the great Russian lands in accordance with God's will. In those days the blessed Aleksandr and his father Yaroslav ruled in Great Novgorod, which the pagans were prevented by the will of God from entering, and thus they managed to fight against their enemies, Lithuania and the *Nemtsy*. And he was everywhere protected by God, and the savage Tatars could not attack them.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 253, 263.

⁵¹ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 279–95.

⁵² *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 280–1.

⁵³ One of the manuscripts that the PSRL has used in its published *Nikon Chronicle* is obviously of later date, since it refers to Aleksandr as the eighth degree in genealogy, and offers precisely the same information on Aleksandr as the *Book of Degrees*, beginning with the hagiographic introduction, whereas other manuscripts start their narration straight from the battle of the Neva. See *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 10, 118.

⁵⁴ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 280–1. See also *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 10, 119.

Since the attack by Baty had already been mentioned at this early chronological stage, and the reader was aware that the Mongol attack was a very well-known fact, the passage included after Andreash had told the news of Aleksandr's fame and superiority came very logically. The Roman king was now presented as not only jealous and envious of Aleksandr's great virtues, but also as a traitorous coward who wanted to attack the Russian lands when they had been fatally weakened by the pagan Tatars. After the glowing praise of Andreash, the Roman king's reaction was given:

When the king of the Roman Land, the Land of Midnight, heard of these words of praise for the manliness and wisdom of the blessed Aleksandr, he was filled with envy and hatred, and his mind was filled with pride, for he knew at the same time that Baty had conquered Russia. The king had hopes to devour the rest of the Russian lands for his country, and he boasted in his pride: 'I'll go and conquer Great Novgorod and some other towns and all the *Sloven* people and take them into captivity, and I will defeat Great Prince Aleksandr himself, or take him into my hands alive.'⁵⁵

Thus the significance of the Neva battle had been given more emphasis, since it occurred at the time when most of the other Russian lands were under devastating attack. As the First Edition of the *Life* had totally ignored the Mongol conquest, the new emphasis given in the *Book of Degrees* profoundly changed Aleksandr's heroic image as the defender of Russia. Ultimately he became the representative of heroic resistance. Aleksandr's *Life* in the *Book of Degrees* also raised up the character of his father, Yaroslav, by stressing his part in governing Novgorod along with Aleksandr during the Mongol conquest, and later by praising Aleksandr's good deeds by saying that he was following the path of his father. The *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees*, like the *Nikon Chronicle*, depicted Yaroslav's death in the same manner as the Second Edition of the *Life* (given in the *Sophia I Chronicle*), as a martyr's death at the khan's court. Thus the emphasis on self-sacrifice became an important feature not only of Aleksandr's image, but also of that of his father, Yaroslav. The *Nikon Chronicle* gave straightforward information about Yaroslav's death:

In the same year [6754/1246] the Great Prince Yaroslav Vsevolodovich was at Kanovich in the Horde . . . where he suffered at the hands of

⁵⁵ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 281; see also *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 10, 120.

the Tatars and languished for Russia, but they allowed him to go home only after he was nearly dead. So Yaroslav did not have time to travel far away from Kanovich before he confronted the death that was inevitable in the lands of those bloodthirsty people, on 30 September. The writings tell us of people of that kind.⁵⁶

The *Nikon Chronicle* stressed movingly how ‘the great prince gave his life for his friends and for the Russian lands’.⁵⁷

The memory of Mikhail of Chernigov’s martyrdom was also important in the image of the ideal prince who faced voluntary sacrifice. The *Book of Degrees* recounted Yaroslav’s death directly after it had revealed information on the death of Aleksandr’s mother, Princess Feodosiya, who had given Yaroslav nine sons:

In the same year the Great Prince Yaroslav went to the godless Baty in the Horde for a second time, and accomplished great exploits there for his brothers and for the sake of all his Orthodox subjects, fulfilling God’s demands, and on account of this he languished. When he left the Horde, he became ill and met his end in that pagan land. God honoured him with pious descendants. Great Prince Mikhail of Chernigov and his *boyarin* Feodor also suffered there at the same time on account of their following of Christ.⁵⁸

Aleksandr’s likeness to his father is emphatically stressed in the *Book of Degrees*, for the next chapter, titled ‘Aleksandr’s visit to the Horde, and Baty’s admiration for his great stature’, states that the blessed Aleksandr was filled with ‘righteous admiration for his honourable father’ as he eagerly prepared to follow his father’s example in fulfilling his obligations towards his Christian subjects.⁵⁹

After presenting Yaroslav’s death in the Horde in a radical tone reminiscent of the chronicles, it is small wonder that the *Book of Degrees* also altered the neutral attitude towards the ‘eastern tsar’, Baty. As in the *Nikon Chronicle*, no respect is shown for this distant ruler who wants to see the admired hero. In that year (6755/1248), ‘the deceitful Baty, after hearing of the noble manliness and invincible courage of Aleksandr, who was protected by God,’ sent a message to him. The well-known passage in which Baty wonders why Aleksandr has not come to meet him is repeated, but the self-sacrificial theme is also included: ‘Aleksandr left for the Horde, like his father,

⁵⁶ *Nikonovskaya letopis*, PSRL vol. 10, 133.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 287.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

not fearing for his earthly kingdom, but risking his life for the sake of all his Christian subjects.⁶⁰

What is significant in the *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees* is its totally new tone with regard to Aleksandr's heroic deeds. Deviating from the original setting, these were now framed in a new historical consciousness, a deep understanding of the violent tragedy that had befallen the Russian lands. It is clear that Aleksandr's military exploits were thus represented in a totally different light, especially when the emphasis was on the voluntary submission of both Aleksandr and his father. They pursued an honourable path in taking care of their people at a time of Mongol pressure, by lavishly sharing their property with their relatives, and by making laborious journeys to the Golden Horde.⁶¹

The narration of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in the *Book of Degrees* thus highlighted a totally new aspect: the fact that the Mongol conquest took place while Aleksandr was acting in the defence of Novgorod. His new image in the *Life* accentuated his readiness to make efforts to secure the welfare of his people. All this was the result of looking at history with a certain amount of hindsight, as syntheses and conclusions of this kind tend to demand a certain perspective in order to perceive the importance of the historical events and to estimate their value. Aleksandr's deeds were no longer looked on as a separate chain of events, mechanically following each other; the new chroniclers, new hagiographers, and new writers of history had a greater need to explain history. An important psychological insight developed which greatly emphasised the voluntary sacrifices made by the Russian princes. The late *Nikon Chronicle* and the *Book of Degrees* both had an introduction which was no doubt reflected in the cinematic approach of Sergey Eisenstein, whose film *Aleksandr Nevskiy* (1938) began with a picture of the ruin of the Russian lands, after which the screen was taken by the one and only light left in the Russian lands that represented a hope for the future, Prince Aleksandr. He was ruling in Great Novgorod, which was untouchable by the enemy, and which offered the arena for Aleksandr's heroic martial exploits.

⁶⁰ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 287–8; see also *Nikonovskaya letopis'*, PSRL vol. 10, 134.

⁶¹ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 279–80.

2.2. *Aleksandr Nevskiy facing the western frontier*

As discussed in the previous section, the envy of Aleksandr's might and fame shown by the king of the Roman land—as presented in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in the *Book of Degrees*—was twice as despicable, because the king already knew what disaster had befallen the Russian lands. The cowardice of the Swedish attack was thus fully demonstrated, and this gave a new feature to Aleksandr Nevskiy's image as a defender of the exhausted and tormented territory of Russia. His heroism gained new psychological insight and depth as the historical background of a ruined Russia was given as a prologue to his battles, dark clouds looming behind him. In addition, the *Book of Degrees* attributed still more intense prayers to Aleksandr, as he was shown pleading with God to help him against the arrogant barbarian king who sought to destroy the Orthodox Christian faith and spill Christian blood.⁶² The description of the battle of the Neva itself followed in general outline the form of the First Edition of the *Life*, supplemented with information from the Novgorod chronicles.⁶³

After the description of the battle at the Neva, the *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees* took a strong stand against the people of Novgorod, who were described in a very unfavourable light, as volatile and unpredictable in their way of governing. This passage was taken from the *Simeonov Chronicle*, in which Aleksandr's departure from Novgorod after the victory at the Neva was depicted as an outcome of the moody people of Novgorod, who could not settle for stable government. According to the *Book of Degrees*, they had 'arbitrary habits and an insubordinate nature' when they rebelled against Aleksandr's rule after the battle and forced him to retire to Pereyasavl Zalesskiy.⁶⁴ Vasilii-Varlaam also mentioned the disagreement between the people of Novgorod and Prince Aleksandr as the reason why the latter left for Pereyasavl, although he did not point to any guilt on the part of the people of Novgorod, nor did he mention any negative character of their manner of government.⁶⁵

After Aleksandr had left Novgorod, the *Nemtsy* seized their opportunity. Here the *Life* in the *Book of Degrees* underlines their religious

⁶² *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 282.

⁶³ See *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 282–4.

⁶⁴ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 284.

⁶⁵ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 38.

heresies by noting how they had voluntarily abandoned the true faith and were being instructed by the Devil himself,⁶⁶ showing some features in common with the edition of Vasiliy-Varlaam in this respect. Vasiliy-Varlaam also referred to the *Nemtsy* who attacked the lands of Novgorod as pagan Latins.⁶⁷

The passage describing the *Nemtsy* lurking in the lands of Novgorod after Aleksandr had left the city is entitled 'The Second Victory', and it describes how, after long discussions with Aleksandr's father, Yaroslav, the people of Novgorod finally persuaded Aleksandr to come back to defend the outskirts of their city. After Aleksandr's arrival the *Nemtsy* were expelled from the fortress of Kopor'e.⁶⁸ Altogether there are five titles referring to Aleksandr's victories, the first being the battle of the Neva, the second the occupation of the fortress of Kopor'e, and the third the recapture of the city of Pskov together with Andrey. The Battle on the Ice is described under the heading of 'The Fourth Victory', and the last is the 'Fifth Victory, over Lithuania'.⁶⁹ Thus all the exploits that belonged to the First Edition are given in general outline, although the literary style has changed, and some details have been adapted from the chronicles. All five battles were also depicted in Vasiliy-Varlaam's edition.⁷⁰

The edition of the *Life* in the *Book of Degrees* clearly emphasised the erratic manner of government in Novgorod. The traditional oration to an unpredictable people, which had been a crucial part of the First Edition and which had also been used by Vasiliy-Varlaam, was not included in the *Life* in the *Book of Degrees*, which decisively moved the blame from the people of Pskov to those of Novgorod. After the victory on the ice of Lake Peypus, Aleksandr was described as returning in triumph to the city of Pskov, where he was received with praising hymns by the whole Church, and after that his fame spread even further—but references were no longer made to the ignorant citizens of Pskov.⁷¹

Even more was to come, for the edition of the *Life* in the *Book of Degrees* also described the events in Novgorod at the time of the Mongol tax collections. The controversy between Aleksandr's policies

⁶⁶ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 284.

⁶⁷ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 38.

⁶⁸ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 285.

⁶⁹ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 284–6.

⁷⁰ *Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama*, 35–42.

⁷¹ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 285–6.

and those of the citizens of Novgorod and his own son, Vasiliy, who was occupying the princely throne, was depicted as another example of the stupidity of the Novgorod population and their foolish attitude towards great princely administration. The author of the *Life* in the *Book of Degrees*, in his attempt to portray the people of Novgorod in a bad light, once again turned to passages from the *Simeonov Chronicle*, and noted how the people were open to the attractions of the Devil when they turned like drunkards against their benefactor, Prince Aleksandr, and, even worse, lured his son Vasiliy into their devilish plots.⁷²

No doubt the *Life's* harsh attitude towards the West and the independent city of Novgorod alike reflected the political atmosphere of sixteenth-century Moscow and the personal politics of Ivan IV. One notable feature of the discussion of several generations in the *Book of Degrees* is the fate of the city of Yur'ev; the *Life* as contained in it also treated the Yur'ev expedition with special interest.⁷³ One of the last titles in the *Life* is 'Aleksandr's journey to the Horde and his desire to capture Yur'ev'.⁷⁴ As in the First Edition, the Yur'ev campaign was mentioned in connection with Aleksandr's last journey to the Horde, as he expressed his wish for his troops to follow his son Dmitriy on an expedition to Yur'ev. The account in the *Book of Degrees* names Dmitriy and his uncle, Yaroslav Yaroslavich, as the leaders of the Yur'ev expedition. The conquest itself is quite briefly reported in accordance with the contemporary sources, and merely mentions that the city of Yur'ev was very large, surrounded by three walls, and that the battle was fierce. The explanation of the history of Yur'ev is quite interesting:

The above-mentioned city of Yur'ev was founded by Prince Yaroslav, son of Great Prince Vladimir, equal of the apostles. This Yaroslav was

⁷² *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 290.

⁷³ The founding of the city of Yur'ev, belonging to the realm of the Russian great princes, was mentioned for the first time in the generation of Yaroslav, linking him with the city through his Christian name, Georgiy – Yuriy in its Russian form. The founding of the city was given a heading of its own, recounting Yaroslav's fight against the *Chud* near the city of Pskov, and how he defeated them and founded a city to which he gave his own name. Also, the elaborate *Life* of Vsevolod-Gavriil of Pskov noted how Vsevolod Mstislavich fought against the *Chud* and took the city of Yur'ev, which was mentioned as his legacy from his father. *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 168–70, 195.

⁷⁴ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 291.

given the name Georgiy in holy baptism, and this is the reason why the city is called Yur'ev. Later the *Nemtsy* took the city by deceit and injustice.⁷⁵

This straightforward manner of relating history in the *Book of Degrees* explains much about the reasons behind both the treatment of the *Life* of Aleksandr, and the features that were added to the old story. It is obvious that the western front was demanding more and more attention during the period when the *Book of Degrees* was compiled, between 1560 and 1563. The Livonian front had been peaceful for a relatively long time. Since the fierce battles of Aleksandr Nevskiy, his son Dmitriy and Dovmont of Pskov against their western neighbours, no large-scale offensives had been mounted there. Moscow was much more engaged in its relationship with Lithuania than with the minor heir of the Teutonic Order in Livonia, the Livonian Order of Knights.⁷⁶ All this changed in 1558, however.

Livonia offered many attractions to Moscow, which had had difficulties in establishing well-ordered trade relations with the West. Although Moscow and England had officially established a trade relationship in 1553, the route was not the smoothest, as the White Sea and the Arctic Ocean were frozen for most of the year. A more direct avenue to Europe clearly lay through the enfeebled lands of the Livonian Order, which had both a strategic location on the eastern shore of the Baltic, and highly developed cities that had long functioned as important centres of international trade.

The Livonian Order of Knights still remained at the centre of political life in Livonia. However, it had lost much of its former strength by the mid-sixteenth century, by which time many of its knights had become Lutherans and had settled down as country squires lording it over Estonian and Latvian peasants. In addition, most of the Livonian ports were free cities ruled by merchant oligarchies, and thus the country lacked a coherent army and administration, whereas the monarchy in Moscow had significantly increased its power by annexing other Russian principalities such as Novgorod and Pskov, and by centralising its administration.

The war between Livonia and Moscow began in January 1558, and at first Ivan IV was successful. The important cities of Narva and Yur'ev fell into Russian hands almost without a fight after a

⁷⁵ *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:1, 292.

⁷⁶ Angermann 2001, 129–43.

period of siege, and although the Livonian knights tried to counter-attack in November 1559 and entered the vicinity of Yur'ev, they failed to regain the city.⁷⁷ Livonia soon allied itself with Poland, while Denmark and Sweden also became interested in partitioning the weakened country of the Livonian knights. Large-scale international intervention was soon to take place in Livonia and on the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland. After the Livonian Order ceded its lands to Poland, Polish intervention turned Moscow's expedition into full-scale warfare. This is the historical setting against which the writing of the *Book of Degrees* must be understood, and it offers a fully understandable explanation for the changes that took place in Aleksandr Nevskiy's image, as presented in the eighth generation. His *Life* not only emphasised the Yur'ev campaign, but also made the *Nemtsy* appear to be much more heretical than in previous editions.

Ivan faced many problems in his domestic policy during the prolonged Livonian war. His suspicion of the plotting boyars grew to such an extent that a number of his ex-advisors and soldiers fled in fear of punishment for treason. One of the most significant emigrants was Prince A. M. Kurbskiy, who fled in 1564 and entered Polish military service. In 1565 Ivan launched his reign of terror, establishing his *oprichnina*, a separate administration and court, in Aleksandrovskaia sloboda. Moscow was thus divided into two parts, one administered by a boyar council, and one by Ivan himself. After a massive campaign of punishments, exiles and executions, Ivan turned his attention once more to foreign policy and the Livonian front. Despite all his domestic troubles and experiments with administration, the long engagement on the Livonian front led Ivan IV to attempt a final campaign to conquer the area. Poland-Lithuania, Sweden and Denmark had all intervened in the rivalry for hegemony over Livonia, and all three shared a determination to keep Moscow from dominating the area. Once Poland had been transformed from a dual monarchy with Lithuania into a unitary kingdom as a result of the Union of Lublin in 1569, it was able to offer powerful resistance on the Livonian front until peace was made in 1582. The Polish influence grew, and many of Ivan's former officers fled to the Polish side.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Niitemaa & Hovi 1991, 161–7.

⁷⁸ In 1574 the throne of Poland became vacant, and Ivan IV presented himself and his son Feodor as candidates. In the end Stephen Bathory, prince of Transylvania,

The specific object of Tsar Ivan's anger was the city of Novgorod, and contemporary sources reveal the motives behind his punitive expedition against the city in general outline: he suspected Archbishop Pimen and the rest of the people of conspiring to hand their city over to the Poles. However true Ivan himself may have imagined these accusations to be, the surviving fragments of evidence suggest rather that his suspicions were founded on more or less falsified documents.⁷⁹ It is possible that the strained situation on the Lithuanian front may also have affected the descriptions of the people of Pskov and Novgorod in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in the *Book of Degrees*.

Ivan set up his court in Novgorod early in January 1570 and launched a violent attack against the city. Many prominent citizens were arrested, tortured, and cruelly executed. All the leading groups in local society were attacked, especially the Church, whose property was mostly confiscated. Archbishop Pimen was arrested, and churches and monasteries were looted during the plundering of the city. The references to vacillation on the part of the shiftily people of Novgorod as depicted in the *Life of Aleksandr* met with a full measure of response in Ivan IV's acts, as he heaped his punishment upon these people whom he accused of treason.

The tsar in Moscow was clearly on a collision course with the old borderlands of Pskov and Novgorod, where attitudes were naturally very different to the official Moscow ideals. The annexation of Pskov in 1510 had been described in the *Pskov I Chronicle* as a punishment

won the crown, but he had to face several years of struggle in order to consolidate his power. It was during this period of internal instability that Ivan seized his chance and started a major attack in Livonia, achieving good results. Under Bathory's determined leadership, however, a large Polish army counterattacked and captured many of the posts that Ivan had seized previously. At the same time, Swedish forces began to threaten Moscow's toehold on the Gulf of Finland. In 1581 the Swedes took Narva, while further south the Polish offensive continued to the very gates of Pskov. The heroic defence by the citizens of Pskov is described in the famous 'Story of Stephen Bathory's campaign against Pskov' which, similarly to the battle descriptions in Aleksandr's *Life*, underlined the arrogant boasting of Bathory and the Poles before the battle, and the defeat of the bold ones. See the 'Story of Stephen Bathory's campaign against Pskov' in Zenkovsky, 354–65. As Ivan tried desperately to find a diplomatic solution to his problems he sent an emissary to Rome, suggesting that if the pope could help to mediate a peace settlement, he might even be open to proposals for Church union. In response, Antonio Possevino came to Moscow and helped Moscow and Poland to put an end to a war that was exhausting them both. In 1582 the Truce of Yam Zapolskiy restored the pre-war borders and ended Ivan IV's conflict with Poland.

⁷⁹ Crummey 1987, 169.

from God, which took place because of the sins of the local people.⁸⁰ The most prominent offices in the city's administration were occupied by people from Moscow, and the citizens of Pskov were deprived of the rights accorded to the privileged Muscovites. The *Pskov I Chronicle* account from the year 1510 describes how the citizens of Pskov pleaded with the Great Prince Vasiliy III Ivanovich not to abolish their ancient traditions of independence, and how the whole town, from the smallest children upwards, wept when the symbol of their independence, the *veche* bell, was taken away.⁸¹ The Muscovite merchants were privileged, and they received houses of their own, while 300 families were expelled and boyars from Moscow were brought in instead. The chronicler described the harsh government imposed on the citizens of Pskov, and said in despair that 'It was then that the honour of Pskov was taken away'.⁸²

Just as the ferocious methods employed by Moscow suddenly interrupted the ancient way of living in Pskov in 1510, an elaborate description of Novgorod's fate in 1570 followed in much the same dark spirit. The Obolenskiy manuscript of the *Pskov I Chronicle* offers a most interesting description of Ivan IV's furious sack of Novgorod in 1570, evoking a deeply apocalyptic feeling with its description of the horrors that the people suffered and the cruel devastation of a once-great city. The description begins with an introduction which describes how some malevolent people denigrated Pskov and Novgorod before the Great Prince of All Russia, Ivan Vasilevich so that he 'left for Novgorod in a great fury and stormed the city with a great force and in an evil manner that had never been seen before'.⁸³ The

⁸⁰ The writing of the *Pskov I Chronicle* is intense and emotional and the account is presented as a real historical turning point, fully comparable to the Mongol conquest of 1238. The apocalyptic feeling of God's punishment is vividly depicted in this passage. The ultimate catastrophe, sacking and destruction, was now happening in Pskov. The Mongol conquest had never touched Pskov as it had almost all the other Russian principalities except for Novgorod, and thus it was bypassed in the local chronicles with only a brief mention of what had happened elsewhere in the Russian lands. The German *Nemtsy* were never depicted as an instrument of God's wrath, not even in 1240–2, when they held the city for two years. Punishment from God reached Pskov only in 1510, when Vasiliy Ivanovich marched into the city and ordered its *veche* bell to be carried away. The misery of the Pskov citizens was great, and the chronicler describes vividly and with a sad and pathetic tone how families were shattered, as some of their members were put in prison, fathers were divided from sons and mothers from their daughters. *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 94.

⁸¹ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 94.

⁸² *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 95–7.

⁸³ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 115.

chronicle goes on with the description of how Ivan imprisoned Archbishop Pimen and sacked the Cathedral of St. Sophia:

He vacated the see of the archbishop and all the monasteries and robbed the people. It is told that he had 60,000 ordinary citizens thrown into the River Volkhov, men, women, and children, so that the corpses of the deceased dammed the flow. He also caused the same kind of destruction in the suburbs of Novgorod. From that time on Great Novgorod has been deserted.⁸⁴

The sack of Novgorod was soon followed by a threat directed at Pskov, and the passage describes how Ivan turned his dreaded *oprichnina* against Pskov, 'wanting to destroy the city as he had destroyed Great Novgorod. He came with great fury like a roaring lion, wanting to kill innocent people and to shed great amounts of blood.'⁸⁵ The city was saved only by heavenly intervention, when God, the Immaculate Mother of God and Vsevolod-Gavriil, patron saint of Pskov, had two boyars pacify the great prince. When Ivan marched into the city, the people mollified his anger with hospitable gestures, such as bringing bread and salt to him in the streets in front of their homes. Ivan entered the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity to visit the tomb of Vsevolod-Gavriil, and during his talks with the priests who were trying to avoid bloodshed, a miracle occurred, in that a stone suddenly fell from the roof of the cathedral and killed Ivan's favourite horse. This was seen as an ill omen, and Ivan left the city in a hurry, taking with him the treasures from its churches.⁸⁶

The chronicler gives us a brief depiction of Ivan's bloody career by describing how he waged war against the Tatars of Kazan and Astrakhan at the beginning of his rule, but after making friends with the kings and emperors of foreign countries he turned against his own people. Finally, God had mercy on the Christians, for Ivan died and was followed by his son, the mild-mannered Feodor, who was a friend of the poor and under whose rule peace was at last achieved. Unfortunately, the Devil did not want to see the Christians in peace, and so he moved Feodor's brother-in-law, Boris Godunov, to murder him, whereupon the troubles started again.⁸⁷ One can hardly blame the seventeenth-century image of the happenings in northern

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 115–16.

⁸⁷ *Pskovskaya pervaya letopis'*, 116.

Russia for the phrase 'Moscow-minded' in the *Pskov I Chronicle*, for the manuscripts describing the events that led to Pskov losing its independence do not praise the ruthless tsar for these events.⁸⁸ On the contrary, the spirit of these chronicle passages could not be much more dismal, and the gloomy description of the cruel tsar of All Russia is full of horror and indignation at Ivan's horrible attacks against the people of Novgorod and Pskov.

Thus it becomes understandable how new features emerged in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in the *Book of Degrees*; it was making a statement against the independent government of Novgorod which posed a threat to Moscow's policy. It can be seen that the attitude depicted in the *Book of Degrees* was a foretoken of the events which were to lay Novgorod under devastating ruination, although it is clear that no plans for such a campaign were yet being made when the *Book* was written. However, by presenting the citizens of Novgorod and their way of government in a negative light, the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* inevitably underlined the moral superiority of the steady and firm rule of a good prince.

Ivan's policies were typical of a politician who was familiar with all the ways of handling both domestic and international politics. He could be utterly ruthless if necessary, but again, if the situation needed it, his political practices could include diplomatic negotiations, even with the pope. It was clear that the western front also had to be watched with attention, and this is also reflected in the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* in the *Book of Degrees*. While the sources from the time of the Mongol conquest were concerned above all with the ideological and religious fight against the East, against Islam and against pagan nomads, the Livonian war led to intensified contacts with the West.

⁸⁸ Okhotnikova argued that the 1547 edition of the *Pskov I Chronicle* adopted an especially respectful tone towards the great prince of Moscow, which in her mind was reflected in the description of the capture of Pskov in 1510. Nasonov also claimed that the 1547 edition was sympathetic towards Moscow's policies. Okhotnikova, *Letopisi Pskovskie* 1989, 28; Nasonov 1955, 6. The sad and fatalistic description of submission to the harsh new Moscow rule that the *Pskov I Chronicle* gives can hardly be regarded as sympathetic, and the division of the Pskov chronicles into those which favour Moscow's policies and those which do not seems unjustified. The *Pskov I Chronicle* contains a breathtaking description of the humiliation of a once-independent and proud city, and the neutral and polished style used to describe the great prince of Moscow was still considered at that time to be the only formal way of describing a ruler who in his stern way had captured the leading position in the Russian lands.

This presented new challenges, since more and more the Moscow clerics also found dangerous opponents in the West.

2.3. *The edition of Iona Dumin and the concern over the imperial lineage*

Ivan IV died on March 1584, and on 31 May his son Feodor was crowned as the new tsar. However weak in his body and simple in his mind, he nevertheless inherited from his father—along with the imperial title—the problematic Livonian question. During Tsar Feodor's rule a new edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was written which was to become very popular and which has survived in several manuscripts.⁸⁹ It is the last in the series of the lives of Aleksandr Nevskiy observed in this survey, and offers a logical completion to the development of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image in his hagiographic *Life*, from the time of its birth to the era when the period that we call the Middle Ages was definitively ending. As the *Life* presented the image of an ideal Ryurikid prince, it is only fitting that the last and most extensive version was written during the reign of Tsar Feodor, the last representative in the uninterrupted lineage of great princes derived from Kiev to the tsars of Moscow.

The writer announced himself in two anagrams, included in the closing paragraph, as Archbishop Iona Dumin.⁹⁰ The edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr written by Iona Dumin (as published by Mansikka) was part of the Chudov monastery manuscript of the *Book of Degrees*, donated to the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir in 1594, as indicated on its front page.⁹¹ The *Book of Degrees* was edited many times after its first appearance in 1560/3, and the Chudov manuscript displayed the second phase of its development.⁹²

The closing paragraph also reveals that Iona Dumin's edition of the *Life* was commissioned by the Patriarch Iov and written with his

⁸⁹ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 123–4. Cf. Bulanin 1988, 431.

⁹⁰ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 124; see Mansikka (1913) 1984, 199.

⁹¹ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 49.

⁹² In the second phase of the development of the *Book of Degrees* more genealogical lines were added from other Russian princely families outside Moscow, such as the Tver, Yaroslavl, and Rostov princely genealogies. The Pskovian prince Dovmont was also referred to in the genealogy of the Lithuanian princes. Pokrovskiy 1988, 78.

blessing.⁹³ Since the feature typical of medieval versions of the *Life*, the anonymity of the writer, was no longer important in the sixteenth-century versions, the backgrounds of the clerics who did the writing can be observed. The clerical career of Patriarch Iov, who had commissioned the new *Life* to be written, witnessed a rapid ascendancy from a parish monk to the highly esteemed clerical circles of Moscow. He was consecrated a monk in 1556 in his native town of Staritsa, and after meeting Tsar Ivan IV he became an archmandrite at the Monastery of the Dormition there. Iov came to Moscow in 1571, and soon took his place in high ecclesiastic circles. He was elected metropolitan in 1587 (from the position of archbishop of Rostov), and his splendid career reached its peak in 1589, when Tsar Feodor appointed him as patriarch of the whole Russian Church.⁹⁴

The Russian Church had remained nominally subordinate to the patriarch of Constantinople for over a century after the fall of that city, but in practice it had been autocephalous since the consecration of Metropolitan Iona in 1448. Finally, in 1589, Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople agreed to help in the creation of a new office, patriarch of Moscow, and consecrated the current metropolitan, Iov, as its first holder. The Church of Moscow could thus be considered at that point to have finally won recognition as an independent and equal member of the international Orthodox community. Even though the decision to found a patriarchate of its own served the interests of the Russian Church, it must be said at the same time that it was primarily achieved by the political leader Boris Godunov, regent for Tsar Feodor.⁹⁵

By all accounts Patriarch Iov had a good relationship with the ruling family, and after the little princess, *tsarevna* Feodosiya, died in 1594, he wrote lengthy consoling letters to the tsar's wife, *tsaritsa* Irina, which have been preserved. In 1604 he wrote the *Life of Tsar Feodor Ivanovich* (*Povest' o zhitii tsarya Feodora Ioannovicha*), in which he not only glorified the deceased tsar but also highlighted Boris Godunov's position as lawful claimant to the imperial throne.⁹⁶

Archbishop Iona Dumin also took an active part in the political life of Russia. He was apparently a close associate of Patriarch Iov,

⁹³ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 124.

⁹⁴ Makariy 1857, vol. 3, pt 2, chp. 2.

⁹⁵ Crummey 1987, 139.

⁹⁶ Enin 1988, 415–20.

and warned the latter of the heresies of the False Dmitriy during the Times of Troubles. Like Patriarch Iov, Iona Dumin enjoyed the favour of Boris Godunov, and both of them were active supporters of Godunov's claims to the Russian throne after the death of Tsar Feodor.⁹⁷ The ecclesiastical career of Iona Dumin had begun in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir, the centre of Aleksandr Nevskiy's cult, where he was appointed archimandrite around 1584. In 1589 he was nominated as archbishop of Vologda and Velikaya Perm, and in 1603 he was installed as metropolitan of Rostov and Yaroslavl. Only a year after that he retired and returned to the monastery in Vladimir, where he soon died.⁹⁸

As observed earlier in this study, high ecclesiastic circles were involved when new editions of the *Life* were commissioned, especially when it came to Metropolitan Makariy's role during the rule of Ivan IV. After the death of Metropolitan Makariy the Church of Russia lost much of its influence over the ruler, who continually interfered in elections and dismissed the metropolitans, so that many candidates were reluctant to rise to the difficult position of metropolitan and highest religious tutor to the paranoid Tsar Ivan, who, despite the Church's dissenting opinion, had married seven times and had ordered wanton executions among his closest circles. Metropolitan Makariy was one of the few who had the chance to enjoy a long and respected career at the head of the Russian Church during the reigns of Ivan IV and his son Feodor. Metropolitan Afanasiy retired to the Chudov monastery in 1566, after being metropolitan for a little more than two years, and his successor, Metropolitan Filipp, was not only exiled to a monastery, but strangled to death by one of Ivan IV's men in 1568. Metropolitan Kirill managed to keep his position for four years until his death in 1572, while the next metropolitan, Antonii, died in 1581, and his successor, Dionisii, was exiled to a monastery in 1587 during the reign of Ivan's son Feodor. Patriarch Iov was also forced to resign in 1605, after the death of his protector, Boris Godunov.⁹⁹

Thus it is obvious that the Church of Russia's position was highly vulnerable to political changes after the death of Metropolitan Makariy, and one might presume that controversies over moral questions were

⁹⁷ Bulanin 1988, 430; Enin 1988, 415–20.

⁹⁸ Bulanin 1988, 430.

⁹⁹ Makariy 1857–83, vol. 3, pt 2, chp. 2.

unavoidable. In spite of this, however, we still find high clerics eulogising the imperial prestige of the Moscow tsars, and this was also faithfully accomplished in Iona Dumin's edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*. Stylistically it is one of the most brilliant examples of the decorative and verbose style which developed in sixteenth-century Moscow.¹⁰⁰ As one of the representatives of great princely generations, Dumin's edition was written in the style and manner of the rest of the *Book of Degrees*, and its emphasis was very strongly laid on the genealogy of the imperial dynasty, so that it followed in general outline the basic pattern of the previous edition of the *Life*. In addition, the author, while revealing its date of writing on the final pages, claimed according to its earlier model that the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* was written at the request of a relative of Aleksandr's who was 'invincible in wars, a greatly acclaimed tsar, the Great Prince Ivan Vasilevich, autocrat of All Russia',¹⁰¹ and the involvement of Metropolitan Makariy was also faithfully mentioned.¹⁰²

The manner of copying, taking some things from the original and leaving others out, led the author to claim that he himself was writing under a commission from Tsar Ivan and Metropolitan Makariy. Mansikka argued that this was motivated by the fact that the text reflected that of the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* edition.¹⁰³ The claim was obviously illogical, since the author admitted at the end of the text that it was written under a commission from Patriarch Iov. But here again, because of his manner of transferring all the eyewitness accounts faithfully, he gives the impression that he was himself an eyewitness on several occasions, e.g. in the miracle of the healed hand during Ivan IV's conquest of Kazan,¹⁰⁴ and when stating that he himself heard of the miracle that occurred in Dmitriy Donskoy's battle against Mamai in Kulikovo from a monk called Prokopius in the city of Vladimir.¹⁰⁵ These accounts were in fact taken directly from the *Book of Degrees* and the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰ Mansikka 1913, 199–200.

¹⁰¹ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 51.

¹⁰² *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 52.

¹⁰³ Mansikka 1913, 178–9.

¹⁰⁴ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 106.

¹⁰⁵ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 103.

¹⁰⁶ Compare *Stepennaya kniga*, PSRL vol. 21:2, 569–70 and *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 27.

As noted by Mansikka, Iona Dumin had several sources for his edition, which he adapted quite freely, often rephrasing the narrative, either shortening or extending it with his own sentences and thoughts. Apart from the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* and the earlier edition of the *Life* in the *Book of Degrees*, which were undeniably the two most important sources, he took many additional remarks from chronicles such as the *Sophia I* and the *Voskresenskaya* chronicles.¹⁰⁷

Iona Dumin's edition of the *Life* places great emphasis on the metaphor of the sun for a saint, for it begins with an introduction that explains the benefits to be gained from lives of the saints. This appears to reflect the influence of the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*, which also had the same emphasis on saints as illuminating lights in its concluding laudatory part:¹⁰⁸

Just as we feel the visible sun, so the lives of the saints also enlighten our deepest consciousness, for the voice of God says of them: 'you are the light of the world'.¹⁰⁹

After borrowing from the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* the involvement of Ivan IV and Metropolitan Makariy in the commission to write the text, Iona's edition begins the hagiographic part with the title 'The birth of a saint'. Here Iona Dumin shows his knowledge of the *Book of Degrees*, and explains Aleksandr's roots, calling him 'the despot of All Russia' (*deospot*), obviously without the negative connotation of the English term), referring to his *varyag* roots, and claiming that he was a descendant of the Roman emperor Augustus.¹¹⁰ The strong emphasis on Aleksandr's family ties shows the effort of Dumin's edition to add adequate material from other generations of the *Book of Degrees* that would otherwise have been left out of the *Life* of Aleksandr because of the spread of information. This attempt also placed more weight on the role of Aleksandr's father, Yaroslav, since in the *Book of Degrees* his fate was recounted in a different chapter, corresponding to the previous degree. Iona Dumin clearly collected basic information from all the sources he knew into one and the same edition, and it was this, added to his literary skill, that made his edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr the fullest and richest, both in its details and in its language.

¹⁰⁷ Mansikka 1913, 177–200.

¹⁰⁸ Compare *Spisok Vladimirskoy redaktsii*, 30.

¹⁰⁹ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 50.

¹¹⁰ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 52.

As was done in the earlier *Life* in the *Book of Degrees*, Iona began his narration with melancholy reminiscences of the Mongol conquest: 'I want to tell you a story that will cause the most phlegmatic of readers to burst into tears,'¹¹¹—emotional pathos indeed, which Iona Dumin was very skilful at using. Then he spoke of the punishment from God that the people had faced because of the sins that had been committed. When he started his description of the sombre phases of the history of the Mongol conquest, he began his narration from the desperate battles fought by the princes of Ryazan, and made an accusation against Great Prince Yuriy Vsevolodovich, who did not go to their help:

The princes of Ryazan sent for Great Prince Yuriy of Vladimir, so that together they could meet the godless descendants of Hagar. But Yuriy would not go, nor did he send his troops to help, for he was in a state of fear . . . And not one of the princes of Russia went to help another, and they did not join their forces together to confront the godless ones. Thus these godless people, because they did not meet any resistance, took each *vochina* one by one, conquered the cities and destroyed the people with fire and sword.¹¹²

Here the reproach is directed at the Russian princes who lacked brotherly love. Although Iona borrowed the manner of describing the gloomy period of Mongol occupation as the prelude to Aleksandr's military exploits, he did it with his own sense of morality and gave a much darker colouring to the Mongol conquest. The *Novgorod I Chronicle* description of the destruction of Ryazan had already blamed Great Prince Yuriy for his passivity,¹¹³ but, in the manner of the *Primary Chronicle*, Iona repeated the accusation directed at all the Russian princes who were too egoistic in guarding their own interests to unite in the face of a common enemy. According to Dumin's strong sense of morality, all this misery was not only the result of the sins but ultimately the outcome of the discord between the princes, who were competing with each other for the throne of great prince, and were thus unable to join forces.¹¹⁴ This was a new feature not only in the development of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, but also in the synthesis that it provided of the older chronicle passages, claim-

¹¹¹ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 54.

¹¹² *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 56.

¹¹³ *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis'*, *starshii izvod*, 74–5.

¹¹⁴ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 59.

ing that the disharmony between the Russian princes was the ultimate reason for this miserable event.

It has been observed in previous chapters how the descriptions of the cruel Mongols grew even more violent during the 16th century, and in the edition of Iona Dumin this cruelty grew still further into an extreme description of slaughter and terror. The devastation of the city of Vladimir inspired Iona Dumin to paint a picture of how the citizens escaped into the churches and Bishop Mitrofan offered up a desperate prayer in the midst of the destruction:

Men are separated from their wives, children from their mothers, the young men are taken prisoners, the old and the children are being slaughtered with the sword, the brave princes are falling to arms, and the monks are being sacrificed. The Russian land is stained with blood, the rivers are full of dead bodies and their water is blended with the blood. There are corpses of children and old people everywhere, and there is no-one left to bury the dead, so that they lie on the ground as food for ravens and dogs . . . A misery like this is hard to describe in words.¹¹⁵

Where did these violent descriptions originate from, since they are not to be found in the earlier chronicles? It was apparently the sixteenth-century writers who coloured the Mongol conquest in this manner, now that the eastern invaders had been declared enemies of the Christians. Also, the literary style had obviously changed, and scenes of violence had become a part of popular writing.¹¹⁶ Intensified emotional narration affected the whole storyline of the *Life*, giving colour and pathos to all its parts.

While misery befell the Russian principalities, Iona presented Aleksandr and his father according to the manner of the *Laurentian Chronicle*, as princes who enjoyed God's protection, as was also the case in the earlier *Life* contained in the *Book of Degrees*.¹¹⁷ He greatly emphasised Yaroslav's role as the heir to the throne, and depicted Novgorod as the safeguard of the Russian great princely line. In the

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Compare the literary tradition in presenting violent scenes, for example in the contemporary description by an English diplomat, Sir Jerome Horsey, of the destruction of Novgorod in 1570, and the popular tale of Count Dracula (originally Vlad Tsepes), one of the first stories that aimed to entertain the reader with its cruel scenes. Horsey, *Travels* 1968, 269; *Skazanie o Drakule*, 236–46. See Tvorogov 1977, 236; Terras 1991, 77.

¹¹⁷ Cf. *Lavrent'evskaya letopis'*, 200.

violent description of how Great Prince Yuriy was killed in battle, Iona Dumin glorified the martyr and ignored completely his previous claims regarding Yuriy's cowardice.¹¹⁸

When Dumin describes the destruction of the Russian cities, the emphasis is clearly on Vladimir, but the capture of Moscow is also regarded as worthy of a separate heading.¹¹⁹ Despite the prominent attention that Dumin gave to the Mongol destruction, the capture of Kiev was not mentioned anywhere, probably for two reasons. Apparently it was too distant to be of interest to the sixteenth-century compiler, as Kiev had been part of the Lithuanian and Polish realm for a long time. Secondly, it was also a question of chronology, since the capture of Kiev took place only two years after the devastation of the northern principalities of the Russian lands.

After Iona Dumin's description of the bloody and violent scene, Baty, who is given epithets such as the 'cursed Baty, cruel and insolent beast', has not yet had his fill of horrendous slaughter, but wants more. He then turns towards Novgorod, to chase after Yaroslav and his son, but now God interferes, and shows His mercy by protecting them from Baty's attack. Here Iona presents the rescue of Novgorod from the pagan invaders as an event of deeper biblical significance and a manifestation of God's will, using a biblical parallel from Numbers 22, in which Balaam is prevented from meeting King Balak by an armed angel standing in his way.¹²⁰

According to Iona Dumin's edition, the Archangel Michael himself appeared with his heavenly host to block Baty's way to Novgorod. After that 'the beast-like and godless Baty' was horrified and turned back to where he had come from.¹²¹ Thus, with this heavenly intervention interpolated into the *Life* by Iona, the blood of the princely family was left untouched, to be nurtured by God. It was clearly not so much Novgorod that was saved, but the princely family, which thereby avoided the shame of being defeated by the Mongols.

Novgorod was thus presented as the safe cradle that kept the genealogy of the great princes of Vladimirian origin unharmed. The genealogical emphasis pervades the whole edition, which is understandable, since the *Life* was meant to depict Prince Aleksandr as a

¹¹⁸ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 54–6.

¹¹⁹ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 56–60.

¹²⁰ Numbers 22:22–23, 31.

¹²¹ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 63–4.

representative of one step in the staircase of the imperial lineage of the Moscow tsars. This may also have arisen from the wishes of Patriarch Iov, who had a good, strong relationship with both Tsar Feodor and his co-ruler Boris Godunov, and who had a genuine concern for the health of the tsar's family. The matter of producing a male heir was a major issue for the continuity of the great princely dynasty, since Feodor was the only surviving legitimate heir of Ivan IV.

Iona Dumin's edition reveals anxiety about the well-being of the ruling family in a final appeal to St Aleksandr, who is called on to protect his descendants, Tsar Feodor and his family. Apparently this was one of the main reasons for the creation of the new edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr in the *Book of Degrees*. God was asked to give Tsar Feodor and his family good mental and physical health and great victories over his enemies.¹²² By listing the members of the great princely family, it also gave important information about its writing date:

O miraculous and blessed Great Prince Aleksandr, our father, together with your forefather, the blessed and illustrious Vladimir, equal to the apostles, and all the saints, we call on you to offer unceasing prayer to our heavenly Lord, the eternal Tsar, to protect the sceptre-holder of your kingdom, who descends from your holy seed, your relative who has been crowned according to holy rites, a tsar and sovereign crowned and protected by God, the Great Prince Feodor Ivanovich, autocrat of All Russia, and his Orthodox *tsaritsa*, Irina, and their Orthodox *tsarevna*, Feodosiya, that they may live in unfaltering faith, and give them all wisdom and astuteness.¹²³

Since the little *tsarevna* Feodosiya was still alive and well at time of the writing of Dumin's edition, there was nothing to indicate that the end of the princely line was to occur in the near future. Although the imperial lineage that had been so pompously glorified in sixteenth-century Moscow was very soon to die out, hopes for a male heir to Tsar Feodor were apparently very much alive when Iona Dumin's edition was written.

When, then, did Iona Dumin write his version of the *Life* of Aleksandr? The author revealed his name in the anagram at the end of the *Life*, and wrote that 'the miraculous Life of Orthodox Great

¹²² *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 121.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

Prince Aleksandr Nevskiy, the miracle-worker, was written in the year 7099, 9th of March'.¹²⁴ If that was true, Iona Dumin wrote his *Life* in 1591. The date is obviously not so simple, since in the next line Dumin says that it was written during the eighth year of the rule of Tsar Feodor.¹²⁵ Since Feodor ruled from 31 May 1584, his eighth ruling year was completed only on 31 May 1592, which suggests that Dumin completed his *Life* on 9 March 1592.

Since Iona Dumin mentions the daughter of Feodor and Irina, the *tsarevna* Feodosiya, in his prayer, this places the date of completion of the manuscript much later than 9 March 1591, for the *tsarevna* was not born until the following year and was baptised on 4 June 1592. Since this only child of Feodor and Irina died in Moscow on 25 January 1594, Iona Dumin must have addressed his appeals to St Prince Aleksandr for the health of the whole family before that date, that is, between June 1592 and January 1594.

Only six days after 9 March 1591, the purposed date of the completion of Iona Dumin's edition, the 10-year-old *tsar'evich* Dmitriy, Ivan's son from his seventh marriage, was murdered in Uglich. Although issuing from his illegitimate seventh marriage, Dmitriy may well have been considered a potential heir if Feodor had remained childless. Dmitriy's position as a possible contender for the throne and a political rival to Godunov was clear, since rumours of threats to his life were already in circulation in the late 1580s.¹²⁶ Boris Godunov's position rested on his family ties to Tsar Feodor, who was married to Boris's sister, Irina. As long as the marriage was childless, the problem of the continuity of the line was a real one.

The date of writing given in the last paragraph, 9 March 1591, could mark the completion of Iona Dumin's first version of his edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr. Here the events of real-life politics are naturally of great interest. In the early spring of 1591 Tsar Feodor had just achieved a brilliant victory over the Swedes. The confrontation between Moscow and Sweden had begun again after the death of the Polish king, Stephen Bathory, when the Poles elected Sigismund Vasa as their next king. Neither Sweden nor Moscow was satisfied with its part in the Livonian war, for Moscow had lost much of its territory along the Gulf of Finland, and King John III of

¹²⁴ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 123.

¹²⁵ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 124.

¹²⁶ Crummey 1987, 209.

Sweden aspired to control Moscow's export trade with western Europe. War between Moscow and Sweden broke out in 1590 and lasted, with interruptions, for five years. At the beginning the war was a success for Moscow, which recaptured the coast of the Gulf of Finland and made significant advances in Karelia. Early in 1591 Tsar Feodor personally led his army to victory, and captured the cities of Yam, Kopor'e and Ivangorod.¹²⁷

The confrontation with the West was thus current at the time when Iona Dumin wrote his edition. He presented Aleksandr Nevskiy as a wise ruler who knew how to deal with the West not only on the battlefield, but also in the diplomatic arena. Dumin gives great credit to the literacy, great learning and education of Aleksandr Nevskiy. The First Edition of the *Life* had already presented Aleksandr as a wise man, but this was done in a quite formal way, likening his intellectual abilities to the wisdom of Solomon. Dumin was able to connect the formal hagiographic pattern of elevating Aleksandr's wisdom to the actual happenings of history, in which he showed his merits. Iona Dumin bestowed much more credit on Aleksandr, and gave a long laudation of his abilities in all manner of things that required intellectual ability, such as dealings with his boyars or the administration of justice. Dumin was also anxious to remind his reader of the wisdom shown by Aleksandr when he outwitted the envoys of the Roman pope.¹²⁸

Dumin was obviously very antagonistic towards the Latin heresies, since the passage in which Aleksandr refuted the envoys' teachings gained a colourful treatment in his hands. The envoys are called 'accursed Latins', and there is a long discussion of the faults in their heretical faith.¹²⁹ The 'God-fearing Great Prince Aleksandr' is described as answering the envoys 'with great wisdom': 'Hear me out, you envoys of the pope and cursed seducers!'¹³⁰

Here the voice of the clerics of Orthodox Russia is loudly heard, and obviously this hatred towards Rome was connected to the happenings of early 1591. During Feodor's reign, the high clerics of Moscow were regularly involved in government affairs and the weekly counsellors' sessions in the tsar's palace. When Feodor returned home

¹²⁷ Crummey 1987, 208; Makariy 1857–83, vol. 5, pt 1, chp. 1.

¹²⁸ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 65–6.

¹²⁹ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 92–5.

¹³⁰ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 92.

to Moscow from his successful trip against the Swedes in 1591, Patriarch Iov came personally to greet him, with great ceremonial splendour. He received the victorious Tsar Feodor with a speech in which he likened him to the Greek ruler Constantine and the Russian Great Prince Vladimir, both regarded as equal to the apostles, because, like them, Feodor had cleaned his country of paganism and enriched it with Christianity. By his victorious capture of the cities of Yam, Ivangorod and Kopor'c that had previously been held by the Swedes, Tsar Feodor had purified them of an alien faith and restored their Orthodoxy. In his *Life* of Feodor, Iov remembered how the Tsar tore down their heathen temples, smashed their idols, and erected holy churches in their places.¹³¹

Iona Dumin's edition prayed for health and long life for Tsar Feodor, but it was ultimately in hope of his military advances that the help of St Aleksandr was requested. In the laudatory part at the end of the *Life*, the miracles of St Aleksandr Nevskiy are listed. Iona Dumin recounted in his introduction that Ivan IV was invincible in war, and the tsar's actual heroism is presented at the end, in the miracle in which Aleksandr Nevskiy is depicted as assisting Ivan in his hour of need in the course of his military exploits. The greatest of all miracles performed by Aleksandr is described, that which took place in 1572, when the Crimean Khan Devlet-Girey was menacing Moscow. Only a year earlier his troops had successfully entered and plundered the outskirts of Moscow while the main Russian army was engaged on the western Livonian front. They had caused a tragic fire to break out in the city, so that thousands of inhabitants suffocated or lost their homes. The disaster in Moscow was decisive in dispelling Ivan's illusions with regard to his *oprichnina*, which was soon to be abolished. In 1572 Devlet-Girey was once again making his way into the Russian heartlands, and penetrated to the vicinity of Moscow, as Iona Dumin recalled.¹³² There Ivan's troops won a decisive victory over the Tatars, despite the superior manpower of the latter.

Iona Dumin's edition describes Aleksandr Nevskiy as taking part in Ivan's campaign, beginning the description with the miracle:

In those times . . . the hand of the tsar crowned by God was held high, when he with the help of God defeated the godless sons of Hagar,

¹³¹ Makariy 1857–83, vol. 5, pt 1, chp. 1.

¹³² *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 113.

who were fighting against the Christians. He was helped in this by the grace of God and the protector of the Christians, the gracious Mother of God, and her swift aides, the saints, with their prayers.¹³³

Dumin describes how a monk called Antoniy saw two young men riding on white horses at the tomb of Prince Aleksandr. The monk recognised the men from the icons as SS Boris and Gleb. They spoke to Aleksandr:

‘Arise, brother, Orthodox Great Prince Aleksandr. Let us hurry to assist our relative, Prince Ivan, who is today fighting against the foreigners.’ And as they had spoken this, the miracle-working Great Prince Aleksandr arose from his grave as if he were alive.¹³⁴

As the three saints rode through the air, Aleksandr suggested that they should fetch still more princely relatives to join the battle, and so they went to plead with the great princes of Vladimir—Andrey Bogolyubskiy, his brother Vsevolod Yur’evich, and Vsevolod’s sons Yuriy and Yaroslav—to join their expedition. This was done, and the number of saints rushing to Ivan’s aid had already risen to seven. That was not enough, and so the saints had a mutual discussion as they rode through the air and decided to head to Rostov to fetch Tsar Peter¹³⁵ ‘so that he too would help us in the battle against the godless sons of Ishmael, on the side of our tsar, the great prince of All Russia.’¹³⁶ Thus Ivan Vasilevich gained his victory with the help of his heavenly aides, saintly princes, mostly of Ryurikid genealogy. The classic words that Alexander Dumas placed in the mouths of his musketeers, ‘All for one, one for all’, describes excellently the impression that Iona Dumin gives of the line of great princes joining together even after death to help their descendants in their hour of need.

It should be noted that a similar situation to that of 1572 was once again happening in 1591. In the early years of Tsar Feodor’s reign raiding parties of Crimean Tatars invaded the southern regions of Moscow annually, and their activity reached its climax in 1591, during the reign of Khan Kazy-Girey, who had Turkish forces to

¹³³ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 116.

¹³⁴ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 114–15.

¹³⁵ Peter was a popular Rostovian saint, a prince from the Golden Horde who moved to Rostov in the second half of the 13th century and converted to Orthodox Christianity. He was officially canonised in 1563. Golubinskiy 1903, 110–11.

¹³⁶ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 115.

assist him. The Crimean attacks did not reach the vicinity of Moscow until July 1591, when the Russian forces confronted the Tatar army in the area of Kotlov, close to the Monastery of Great Prince Daniil.¹³⁷ The emphasis on Tsar Feodor's success against the Tatars strongly indicates that Iona Dumin did not write his edition in 1591, but a year later, as he himself claimed, during the eighth year of the Tsar's reign. Dumin prayed straightforwardly for help from God in Feodor's wars against the Tatars:

May the eternal God give him [Tsar Feodor] victory over his enemies and place those from foreign tribes under his dominion, may He help him to subdue all the lands of the sons of Hagar, and may his name echo with fame and fear among all the heathen tribes.¹³⁸

Believing that Iona Dumin's edition was written in 1591, Mansikka concluded that the last and greatest of the miracles listed by Dumin was interpolated into the manuscript afterwards, since it is absent from some copies of Dumin's edition, those that are supposedly of earlier origin. Mansikka suggested that the interpolation was done later either by Iona Dumin himself or by a later copyist.¹³⁹ However, since the miracle existed at least in the manuscript donated to the monastery at Vladimir in 1594, the interpolation was evidently done soon after the original version was finished. Also, the mention of the *tsarevna* Feodosiya suggests either a later writing date or another later interpolation, done after June 1592 but earlier than January 1594.

Whatever the exact date and history of Iona Dumin's edition, it was, however, very much Vladimirian in concept. Dumin himself not only began his career in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir, but also retired there at the end of his life, and his edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr nurtured the same vision acclaimed in the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*, that the great miracle-working Prince Aleksandr was above all a Vladimirian prince. The eulogy very much concerned the city that had gained such a fine miracle-working saint. Following the liturgy, Dumin's edition of the *Life* boasts:

Rejoice you wonderful city of Vladimir, to whom God gave such a gift, not only in his lifetime, but also after his death. Stories are nowa-

¹³⁷ Tvorogov 1994, 139.

¹³⁸ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 121.

¹³⁹ Mansikka (1913) 1984, 196–7.

days being told in the city of Novgorod of this defender of Orthodoxy and brave conqueror of the godless tribe of Hagar, this defender of all the Christian Russian lands.¹⁴⁰

Interestingly, Dumin gives the impression that the memory of Aleksandr Nevskiy was above all preserved in Vladimir, and he even suggests that it had not been commonly preserved in Novgorod until recently. The memory which Dumin refers to is ultimately 'the brave conqueror of the godless tribe of Hagar', and thus Aleksandr's merits in defending the western borders of Novgorod are not to the forefront. The Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in the city of Vladimir was the centre of Prince Aleksandr Nevskiy's cult, and it distinguished itself by producing several editions of his *Life* during the 16th century, alongside one edition produced in Pskov (that of Vasiliy-Varlaam). It also kept a list of miracles that had occurred at his grave and created a liturgy in his memory. Nothing is known of the liturgy of Aleksandr Nevskiy in Vladimir before the 16th century. After the creation of the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* and the canonisation, the monastery faithfully fostered the memory of its princely saint, and one more edition of his *Life* was created under its auspices in the second half of the 17th century, when Archimandrite Vikentiy adapted a shortened version of Iona Dumin's edition. He also wrote another liturgy of Aleksandr Nevskiy.¹⁴¹

Understandably, the centre of the cult was also the centre of its hagiographic literary activity, and in Iona Dumin's edition the importance of the monasteries for the recording of history is certainly distinguished. Centuries ago, when the first *Life* of Aleksandr Yaroslavich had arisen in the same monastery, this was in answer to the need to give instructions to the rulers of Vladimir, to build rather than to destroy. In this sense Iona Dumin was continuing the tradition of the monastery in educating a ruler. The new way of arranging historical narratives around the lineage of the Moscow great princes actually had little influence on the overall image of Aleksandr Nevskiy, which had been formed during the previous decades. Since the psychological intensity of such accounts grew steadily as the tools of literary description provided more room for artistic embellishments in the story, Iona Dumin's edition can reasonably be considered the

¹⁴⁰ *Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina*, 119.

¹⁴¹ Mansikka (1913) 1984, 200–1.

most elaborate of all in both its content and its style, although it added nothing significantly new to what had been presented in the first cohesive edition of Vasiliy-Varlaam. After the thorough historical treatment of Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich's life in Vasiliy-Varlaam's edition, no hagiographer could leave any of the most important events of the 13th century without a comment on their relevance to the *Life* of Aleksandr. Here the interdependence between historical biographies, such as the *Life* of Aleksandr, and the attitude of the chronicles is obvious. The changes that took place in Aleksandr Nevskiy's image developed slowly, and they were organically connected with the historical attitude of the contemporary chronicles.

3. EPILOGUE: FROM THE TOOL OF THE IMPERIAL DYNASTY TO A NATIONAL MYTH

The leadership of Moscow assigned itself a messianic mission, led not only by the ruling tsar but also by his ancestors, whose deeds had prepared Moscow for its great role. In time Aleksandr Nevskiy became a heavenly protector of the great princes of Moscow, a principality grown up to prosperity and wealth after Aleksandr's youngest son Daniil and his descendants had established its steady development. As discussed earlier, by the middle of the 16th century, he was presented as a patron saint of the Daniilovichi family in their military expeditions. When Feodor Ivanovich died with no heir in 1598, the new dynasty of the Romanovs favoured and appreciated the forefathers of their predecessors and adopted their princely cults.

Significantly, no church in Moscow was known to be dedicated to Aleksandr Nevskiy during the reign of Ivan IV or his son Feodor, the first one being built in the Moscow Kremlin only during the 17th century, under the Romanov tsars, by Patriarch Filaret Nikitich. This church is first mentioned in 1625, and was located, together with the Cathedral of the Miracle-workers of Chernigov (*sobor Chernigovskikh chudotvortsev*), in Ivan's Square, near the bell tower of Ivan IV in the Moscow Kremlin. It was badly damaged in a fire in 1626, but a new church was consecrated in 1634, and Tsar Mikhail Feodorovich and his heir, Aleksey Mikhailovich, took part in imposing ceremonial processions there on Aleksandr Nevskiy's feast-day. Between 1681 and 1683 the church was removed to the Kremlin's Secret Gates (*Tainitskie vorota*).

After the canonisation of Aleksandr Nevskiy in 1547, the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in the city of Vladimir had a central position in the development of his cult, as it was the guardian of his relics. The old shrine was to lose these at the beginning of the 18th century, when Peter the Great transferred the centre of the cult of Aleksandr Nevskiy right to the heart of his new capital city of St Petersburg, to a new monastery dedicated to Aleksandr Nevskiy in 1723. The Church of Aleksandr Nevskiy at the Secret Gates of the Kremlin was torn down in 1770 and its property donated to the

Cathedral of the Intercession (*Pokrovskiy sobor*, also known as the Cathedral of St Basil) in Red Square.¹

Just as the earliest church dedicated to Aleksandr Nevskiy is of a fairly late date, the first known icons representing him are from the end of the 16th century. It is doubtful whether any icons were produced before Aleksandr's canonisation in 1547. Father of Dmitriy Donskoy, Great Prince Ivan Ivanovich, had left his son and heir an icon of St Aleksandr in his will of 1356, and it is sometimes argued that this must have been an icon of the patron saint of the Moscow ruling family, Aleksandr Nevskiy.² Since the icon has not been preserved, and there are no other references to it besides the will of Prince Ivan, the saint in question could in principle have been any of the 22 Alexanders commemorated as martyrs and saints in the Orthodox calendar. As discussed earlier, there is no evidence to claim the early canonisation of Aleksander Nevskiy, and even less to support the claim that Metropolitan Kiprian supported the cult of Aleksandr Nevskiy. Just as the theory of his early canonisation is very popular, so too the iconographic presentation of Aleksandr Nevskiy has been believed to have been born soon after the victory of Kulikovo. In addition, Begunov believes that the icon type of Aleksandr Nevskiy depicted in another seventeenth-century icon, 'Saint Aleksandr Nevskiy with his deeds' (*Svyatoy Aleksandr Nevskiy s deyaniem*), was based on an original icon painted soon after this local canonisation in 1381.³

After the canonisation of 1547, instructions on the iconographic representation of Aleksandr Nevskiy became necessary, and the practice of depicting him as a schema monk in the icons was established. In the guide to icon painting (*Ikonopisniy podlinnik*) it was laid down that he should be represented as a bearded, ascetic monk wearing the robes of the schema and holding a scroll in his hand.⁴ The oldest icon showing him as a monk is dated to the end of the 16th century,⁵ and the pattern was repeated in a cloth icon embroidered by one of Ivan Ivanovich's deserted wives, Paraskeva (died 1620),

¹ Begunov 1966, 321; Begunov, *Drevnerusskie traditsii* 1971, 72–3; see also Khitrov (1893) 1998, 211.

² Golubinskiy 1903, 65; see also Khoroshev 1986, 124.

³ Begunov, *Ikonografiya svyatogo* 1995, 172.

⁴ Khitrov (1893) 1998, 211; Begunov 1966, 313. See *Stroganovskiy ikonopisniy litsevoy podlinnik*, list 25; *Podlinnik ikonopisnyy*, 52.

⁵ See Begunov 1965, plate 5.

who donated it to the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir in 1613.⁶ Shlyapkin suggested that it was donated to the Church of Aleksandr Nevskiy, which was built during the reign of Feodor Ivanovich, and placed above the gates of the main entrance to the monastery.⁷ From the beginning of the 17th century four embroidered cloths exist representing Aleksandr as a monk, and there is one similar image in a Church calendar.⁸ The catalogue of Antonova and Mneva mentions two icons from the beginning of the 17th century which show Aleksandr as a monk bowing in prayer in front of an icon of the Mother of God.⁹

An icon type that came to be known as 'Aleksandr Nevskiy with his *Life*' (*Aleksandr Nevskiy s zhitiem*) developed under the influence of the hagiographies which contained lists of miracles, probably at the beginning of the 17th century. The above-mentioned icon 'St Aleksandr Nevskiy with his deeds' belongs to this group. It featured a central picture of Aleksandr Nevskiy in a monk's habit surrounded by 32 smaller images depicting his life and posthumous miracles.¹⁰ The icon is 125 cm high and 99 cm wide, the central image 48 × 30 cm, and the smaller ones 15 × 15 cm, except for the last two images, which are somewhat larger. Eleven of the small images depict the earthly life of Aleksandr, and the remaining 21 miracles that happened after his death. There is no reason to doubt Begunov's argument that the icon painter's source was Iona Dumin's edition of Aleksandr's *Life*, as he faithfully depicted every single miracle that Iona Dumin described.¹¹

In the central section of this icon Aleksandr Nevskiy is depicted as a bearded monk, making a gesture of blessing with his right hand. He is wearing a white undergarment and a long, hooded monk's cassock. The hood has a cross on the forehead, and under his cassock there is a long mantle, also with a cross. There is ornamental writing under the image stating that this is 'the Orthodox Great Prince St Aleksandr Nevskiy, also known by his monastic name of

⁶ Khitrov (1893) 1992, 277.

⁷ Shlyapkin 1915, 10.

⁸ Begunov 1966, 312.

⁹ Antonova & Mneva 1963, 411–12, 484–5, 488–9.

¹⁰ The icon is published as a black and white photograph in Begunov 1966, and coloured in *Pamyatniki literatury drevney Rusi. XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.

¹¹ Begunov 1966, 311–26.

Aleksiy.’ The events of his active life are depicted in the two uppermost rows of small images. The first three pictures depict his birth, baptism and education, the fourth the visit of Andreash, and the fifth Aleksandr praying in front of the icon of the Mother of God, with the enemy camp in the background. The sixth picture shows Pelgusiy, surrounded by a halo, and his vision of Boris and Gleb, and the seventh, which is twice as wide as the others, depicts Prince Aleksandr confronting the Swedish king in combat. Instead of a spear, he is fighting with a sword, as described in Dumin’s edition. The eighth picture shows Aleksandr travelling to meet Khan Baty in the Horde and then returning to Vladimir. In the ninth he is listening to the envoys of the Roman pope, in the tenth he is again going to the Horde, to meet Khan Sartak, and in the eleventh, he is dying as a monk.

The painter has included only one of Aleksandr’s military exploits, the battle of the Neva, in his icon, and thus the confrontations with the Teutonic Knights and the Lithuanians were omitted. He obviously did not have enough room in his composition to present all the details of Aleksandr’s life, and was forced to leave much aside. Instead he faithfully repeated every single one of the 18 miracles recounted in Iona Dumin’s edition of the *Life*. This underlines the significance of Aleksandr’s role as a miracle-worker, which was emphasised in his officially established cult from 1547 onwards. The miracle scenes are also depicted as having taken place at Aleksandr’s grave in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir, where an icon of Aleksandr as a monk is also pictured. As noted above, this has been seen as evidence of the early existence of Aleksandr’s monk icon.

The last two miracles were granted more space than the others. The first of them, panel 31, depicts the vision of the monk Antoniy, in which he saw Boris and Gleb arrive at Aleksandr’s grave to plead with him to help Dmitriy Ivanovich in his battle against the Mongols in Kulikovo. The last panel is four times wider than the others, since it depicts the long scene of the miracle that took place in 1572, when the forces of Moscow defeated the Tatar army of Devlet-Girey; the events are presented as developing from left to right, as in a cartoon. First Boris and Gleb are standing at Aleksandr’s grave asking him to join them, and then all three are depicted at the princely graves of Andrey Bogolyubskiy, Vsevolod III, Yuriy and Yaroslav Vsevolodovich. Next, the seven warriors are seen riding through the air, hurrying

to the aid of the Russian troops against the Tatars. The last scene, in the bottom right corner, depicts the Tatars rushing to escape.

Begunov dated the icon to the beginning of the 17th century, stating that, in view of the dependence of its details on Iona Dumin's edition, it could not predate the latter, i.e. it was painted some time after the period 1591–4. The icon belonged with items that had been donated to the Cathedral of the Intercession from the dismantled Church of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the Moscow Kremlin, and Begunov estimated that it may have existed even before the first church was built in the Kremlin in 1625.¹² The colours and the great number of small *zhitie* pictures suggest the seventeenth-century Moscow style, and the style and composition have parallels in the sixteenth-century paintings of the Stankov region. The small pictures depicting Aleksandr's earthly life have features in common with the miniatures of the *Litseyoy Chronicle* from the mid-16th century.¹³

One of the most flamboyant examples of a Romanov tsar using the ideology of the Rurikid dynasty and their genealogical roots is contained in the icon of Simon Ushakov, painted in the Kremlin icon workshop in 1668. The icon is named either the 'Mother of God of Vladimir' (*Bogomater' vladimirskaya*) or the 'Tree of Moscow State' (*Drevo Moskovskogo gosudarstvo*). It shows Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich Romanov as heir to the throne of Moscow, a state whose roots go back to 1326, when Tsar Ivan Kalita and Metropolitan Peter (1308–26) started work on building the Cathedral of the Dormition in the Moscow Kremlin. Metropolitan Peter was later canonised and was an important ideological figure, for it was he who first moved the see of the metropolitan from Vladimir to Moscow. This naturally gave great prestige to the princes of Moscow, and symbolised its significance among the Russian principalities.

The 105 cm high and 62 cm wide icon shows Tsar Ivan Kalita and Metropolitan Peter planting a huge plant in the Moscow Kremlin, in front of the cathedral. The plant is a mixture of a tree and rambling roses that supports altogether 21 medallions, the middle one being a large image of the Mother of God, surrounded by two branches of the rose, each bearing 10 medallions. The medallions depict members of the family of the Moscow tsars, various metropolitans, and holy fools (*yurodivie*). The lowest right-hand medallion

¹² Begunov 1966, 321–2.

¹³ Begunov 1966, 322–5.

depicts Aleksandr Nevskiy wearing the habit of a schema monk. On the ground, the Romanov family is testifying to the planting of the tree. Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich stands on the left and his wife, the *tsarevna* Irina, on the right, together with their sons, Aleksey and Feodor. At the top of the icon, above the tree, Christ Himself is seen in heaven, blessing the tree and the tsar's family.¹⁴

Alongside the icon of Aleksandr as a monk, there still remained the tradition of depicting him as an earthly warrior prince. This was done in the sixteenth-century illustrated chronicles, such as the *Litsevoy Chronicle* from the middle of the 16th century, which contains a huge set of miniature paintings with scenes from the *Life* of Aleksandr during the years 1240–63.¹⁵ There were also wall paintings in many of the Kremlin churches in which he was depicted as an earthly prince.¹⁶ Here Aleksandr's contrasting roles have to be considered, for in the images in the Moscow chronicles and in the Kremlin churches he was above all one of the ancestors of the Moscow tsars, and thus his position as a ruler, a prince, was an essential attribute, whereas the icons presented him above all as an exemplary Christian and a saintly miracle-worker.

In addition, the emphasis on presenting Aleksander Nevskiy in the icons as a schema monk had local variations, according to Shlyapkin, who argued that this icon type originated in and was cherished at the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir, whereas the sixteenth-century canonical instructions for icon painters in Novgorod, for example, did not mention the representation of Aleksandr Nevskiy at all. It was only a Filimonov version of the instructions produced in 1667 that had an instruction to depict Aleksandr Nevskiy not as a monk, but as a figure comparable to St George, in a red garment and blue undergarment.¹⁷ In Shlyapkin's

¹⁴ See Onasch 1961, plate 133; and Antonova & Mneva 1963, 411–12.

¹⁵ Published in Rozov 1990.

¹⁶ Aleksandr Nevskiy is shown as a prince in the Cathedral of the Annunciation (*Blagoveschenskiy sobor*) paintings on the pilasters done in 1508, and in the Cathedral of St Michael the Archangel (*Arkhangelskiy sobor*) murals preserved from the year 1652–66, which were based on the earlier paintings. See Begunov 1966, 313.

¹⁷ Shlyapkin 1915, 16. Shlyapkin based his idea on the *Ikonopisniy podlinnik novg. Ryad. Po sokhr. Spisku XVI v.*, Moskva 1878, 46. Begunov referred to another edition of the Novgorodian *Ikonopisniy podlinnik*, and claimed that instructions to show Aleksandr Nevskiy as St George already existed in the 16th century. His source was the *Ikonopisniy podlinnik novgorodskoy redaktsii po Sofiyskomu spisku kontsa XVI veka s variantom iz spisikov Zabelina i Filimonova*, Moskva 1873. I have not seen both of these, but it seems that Begunov did not regard the seventeenth-century Filimov edition

view, the local chroniclers of Novgorod and Pskov did adopt the *Life* of Aleksandr into their chronicles, but cherished more his image as a *bogatyr*, a courageous warrior. He saw a link between this secular emphasis and the Novgorod-Pskov icon type, which depicts Aleksandr Nevskiy as a prince, in royal apparel, riding on a horse.¹⁸

When discussing the earthly representation of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the iconographic presentations, there is still one important icon which is often connected to him. It is often argued that Aleksander Nevskiy is depicted in the fifteenth-century Novgorod icon of the 'Battle between the Troops of Suzdal and Novgorod'/'Miracle of the Icon of the Mother of God of the Sign' (*Bitva Suzdal'tsev s novgorodtsami/Chudo ot ikony znameniya Bogomateri*).¹⁹ This icon type that arose in the mid-15th century represents, on three levels, the historical battle between Novgorod and the army of Great Prince Andrey Bogolyubskiy in 1170. According to the famous legend, the siege mounted by the army of Suzdal had already lasted for three days and Novgorod was having great difficulty in defending itself, when a miracle occurred. An icon of the Mother of God that had been lifted onto the city wall miraculously began to shed tears, which caused the Suzdal troops to flee in panic and disorder.

The first level, at the top of the icon, shows the procession in which the icon, the 'Mother of God of the Sign' (*Znamenie*), was carried to the city wall. The second level shows the attack by the forces of Suzdal and depicts their arrows flying towards the icon, which is now hanging on the wall, and the last level, at the bottom, shows the victory of the Novgorod troops as they attack from the city gate and force the men of Suzdal to flee in chaos. The victorious troops of Novgorod are led by either four or three haloed saints, depending on the icon. Two of them can be recognised as the young princely saints, Boris and Gleb, and one as St George, but the identity of the fourth, dressed in warrior's armour and a helmet, has remained

as a separate and individual source. Although no icons like that have been preserved from the 16th century, Begunov mentions two possible icons of that type in existence abroad, one in Prague and the other taken to America. No source other than oral hearsay is given, however. Cf. Begunov, *Ikonografiya svyatogo* 1995, 173–4.

¹⁸ Shlyapkin 1915, 16. It should be noted here that Shlyapkin did not have any proper evidence to back his claims that the icon of Aleksandr riding on a horse was from the 17th century, and it could well have been produced on the orders of Peter the Great, to cast Aleksandr in the role of an earthly warrior prince.

¹⁹ Cf. Onasch 1961, plate 41.

unknown. He is sometimes identified as Aleksandr Nevskiy, although there is no factual evidence to support this.²⁰

A. G. Bobrov has put forward some interesting interpretations of the ideological backgrounds of the icon. He believes that the presence of the alleged Aleksandr Nevskiy in the icon represents the ideological and religious tension between Moscow and Novgorod which developed after the Church council of Florence-Ferrara in 1437–9. Bobrov argues that the result of the council, the unification of the western and eastern Churches, was received as a shock in Novgorod when news of it arrived in 1439. Soon after the news reached Novgorod, its archbishop, Evfemiy II, started a sizeable campaign emphasising Novgorod's position as the citadel of Orthodox faith; in Bobrov's arguments Moscow was seen as an apostate after favouring a metropolitan who submitted the Russian Church to such a heretic union. In this ideological setting Bobrov sees the icon depicting Novgorod's battle for the Orthodox faith against the heretic Moscow, which supposedly favoured metropolitan Isidore and his submission to the Latin Church. Boris, Gleb and Aleksandr Nevskiy fighting in arms for Novgorod were, in Bobrov's hypothesis, clear arguments for his claims.²¹

When considering the development of his image in the chronicles and in his *Life*, it seems, however, that Aleksandr Nevskiy's role is not appropriate in this context, as his heroic image can hardly have been useful towards his own relatives on the Moscow great princely throne. In addition, it must have been obvious to fifteenth-century Novgorodians that, at the time of Novgorod's battle against Suzdal in 1170, there could be no heavenly assistance from St Prince Aleksandr Nevskiy, who was not even born at that time.

The proper context for depicting Aleksandr Nevskiy as a prince in his warrior apparel was in dynastic usage, in Moscow, among his great princely descendants. When remembered as a representative in the great princely line of Moscow, he was presented as such, as was the case in the famous icon, the 'Church Militant' (*Tserkov' voynstvuyushchaya*).²² It was created in the workshop of Metropolitan Makariy himself, as the Stoglav Church council of 1551 had placed the work-

²⁰ Konrad Onasch also suggested the legendary Il'ya Muromets as the identity of the warrior. Onasch 1961, 365.

²¹ See Bobrov 2001, 194–215.

²² Cf. Smirnova 1989, 175–9, 302.

shops of icon painters under the supervision of the bishops. As a product of the Moscow school, it represents the fondness for crowded scenes and innumerable details at its best.²³ This huge icon (144 cm high and 396 cm wide), which was placed in the Cathedral of the Dormition in the Moscow Kremlin in the 1550s, shows on the visual level what Jona Dumin's edition of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* relates verbally through its accounts of his miracles; he can be seen as a leader of the hosts of heaven against the forces of Islam, as the icon depicts a procession of distinguished ancestors led by the Archangel Michael and Ivan IV.

The icon illustrates an allegory of the victory of Moscow over Kazan as the triumph of the heavenly Jerusalem over sinful Gomorra. From the burning city of sin a great host is entering the heavenly city, which is surrounded by walls. The host contains ancestors of Tsar Ivan IV. Among the ancestors depicted are the saints from the Kievan era, Vladimir and his sons Boris and Gleb, and in the middle of the picture is a prince carrying a white cross, who has been interpreted as being either Vladimir Monomakh or the Byzantine emperor Constantine.²⁴

These central figures are surrounded by the heavenly host, led at the top of the picture by Dmitriy Donskoy, followed by his patron saint, St Demetrius of Thessalonica, while the warriors at the bottom are led by Aleksandr Nevskiy, carrying a red flag, dressed in a helmet and armour and followed by his patron saint, St George. There is a distinct symmetry to the iconic representation of the imperial princely order and the heavenly order, as Dmitriy is supported by St Demetrius, and Aleksandr by St George. Moreover, the warlike aspect is heavily emphasised, as all of the saints are depicted as young warriors.²⁵ Thus Aleksandr Nevskiy and Dmitriy Donskoy, by virtue of their historic military achievements, were given the honour of leading the warriors into battle and conveying the claim to the spiritual throne of Rome in Moscow's battle against the enemies of Christianity. The official ideology of the time of Ivan IV—which was also expressed through the arts, such as the 'Church Militant' icon and Iona Dumin's edition of the *Life of Aleksandr*—gives us a powerful impression that, in conquering Kazan, Orthodox Moscow

²³ Onasch & Schniepr 1995, 88.

²⁴ Antonova & Mneva 1963, 128–9; Smirnova 1989, 302. Crummey 1987, 201.

²⁵ See Attwater 1979, 102; Farmer 1987, 177–8.

was carrying out its divinely ordained historic mission, in which the pious forefathers of the tsar had an essential role.

Aleksandr's position as a heavenly warrior of Moscow altered profoundly at the beginning of the 18th century, after the Great Nordic War, when Peter the Great adopted the title of emperor and moved his capital from Moscow. It is striking to note how the most powerful rulers of the Russian lands seem to have had an impact on the cult of Aleksandr Nevskiy. As Peter was eager to strip Moscow of its great princely heritage and the Orthodox Church of its prestige, their heavenly protector was also going to have to meet some changes. It appears that in the case of Aleksandr Nevskiy, the heavenly warrior survived, but lost his monkish features. One could say that the defender of the Orthodox faith changed his apparel from monkish garments to the armour of Mars, god of war. The image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in icons was altered profoundly by an *ukaz* from the synod in 1724 ordering that henceforth he should be regarded solely as an earthly prince.²⁶

The impetus for the change in the manner of depicting Aleksandr Nevskiy in icons and hagiographic descriptions was naturally derived from an alteration in his cult, which Peter changed to a heavenly protector of the new capital of the empire. Peter made this change consciously and with a great deal of forethought. He had already been searching for a suitable site for a *lavra*, a monastery of Aleksandr Nevskiy, since 1704, hoping to find one near the place where Aleksandr had fought the battle of the Neva several centuries earlier. Finally, in 1710, the monastery was founded, under the protection of Aleksandr's namesake, Aleksandr Menshikov, one of Peter's most distinguished officials, who had himself fought against the Swedes in both Poltava and Ingria.

To break the old tradition of the cult of Aleksandr Nevskiy, Peter ordered his relics to be transferred from their old burial place in Vladimir to his newly founded imperial capital, St Petersburg, on 30 August 1723. The date was deliberately chosen to commemorate the victory over the Swedes, sealed by the treaty of Nystad two years earlier. Aleksandr Nevskiy was to become a third heavenly protector of the imperial city, after SS Peter and Paul. The transfer of relics is always one of the greatest events in the cult of a saint, and

²⁶ Begunov 1966, 313.

careful plans were made to send Aleksandr's relics on their long journey, their date of arrival at the newly founded monastery being carefully selected to be exactly the date of the Treaty of Nystad. This meant that 30 August would become the new date for commemorating Aleksandr Nevskiy, instead of the date of his burial, 23 November.²⁷

With the new place for Aleksandr's relics beside the River Neva and the new day of commemoration, Aleksandr Nevskiy's image was emphatically altered into that of a more warlike protector of Russian claims to the shores of the Baltic. It also meant, of course, that the content of his *Life* had to be dramatically changed. Gavriil Buzhinskiy wrote both the new liturgical texts for the new feast-day, 30 August, and a new edition of the *Life*. As it was forbidden to represent Aleksandr as a monk in icons, he also had to be seen in his *Life* above all as a warrior, not as a man of prayer or as an ascetic. His miracles and his Christian virtues were clearly secondary matters. The earthly impression of the new *Life* was highlighted by a new style, which was more realistic and historical in its narrative devices.²⁸

Secondly, his warrior image was directed straight at the Swedes, and no other targets were envisaged. The Swedes were identified as an eternal enemy of Russia in the area of the Baltic Sea, not only in connection with Aleksandr's new feast-day, but also in the new liturgical texts, which rejoiced in the prince who liberated the land of Izhora and the whole of Russia from the burden of the Swedes.²⁹ The new edition of the *Life* of Aleksandr also greatly emphasised his image as a conqueror of the Swedes. No particular emphasis was placed on the other western enemy, the Teutonic Knights, as Peter did not want to irritate the Germans, and certainly not Karl Friedrich, duke of Holstein-Gottorp, to whom he hoped to give the hand of his daughter Anna in marriage.³⁰

The new image of Aleksandr was that of a warrior wearing a princely outfit, or more martial plate armour. One icon representing this type is located today in the chapel of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the Monastery of Valaam, in which he is seen standing before the *lavra* of Aleksandr Nevskiy in St Petersburg, wearing plate armour,

²⁷ Begunov, *Drevnerusskie traditsii* 1971, 73–82.

²⁸ Begunov, *Drevnerusskie traditsii* 1971, 73.

²⁹ See *Sluzhba 30 avgusta* in Khitrov (1893) 1998, 204–5.

³⁰ Leitsch 1978, 203.

his bare head surrounded by a halo and a long robe trimmed with ermine draped over his right shoulder, leaving his left shoulder free. The red band of his military order, founded in 1725, can be seen on his left shoulder, and his helmet, sword and buckler are lying on the ground at his feet.

Thus, from the beginning of the 18th century, Aleksandr Nevskiy changed from the protector of the Moscow tsars into a kind of state icon. Peter's widow, Catharine, founded a military Order of Aleksandr Nevskiy, and subsequent rulers honoured his *lavra* with many splendid gifts. Three nineteenth-century tsars bore his name, and his role as protector of the imperial family was eagerly emphasised. The nineteenth-century national awakening and slavophile movement meant that the Orthodox religion came to occupy a special position in the hearts of fervent patriots, and many of the slavophile spiritual ideals were accentuated in the virtues of the Orthodox saints. Aleksandr Nevskiy was flamboyantly displayed in the frescoes of one of the most splendid churches to be built in the 19th century, the Temple of Christ the Saviour (*Khram Khrista Spasitelya*) in Moscow. The founder of the church was Tsar Aleksandr I, the main work on its construction took place during the reign of Aleksandr II, and it was finally finished in the time of Aleksandr III. One of its side chapels was also dedicated to Prince Aleksandr Nevskiy. The frescoes included scenes from his *Life*, depicted in the manner of historical paintings and, as in many other nineteenth-century icons, he was portrayed as a youthful warrior, often with a contemplative expression on his sensitive and beautiful face.³¹

Thus it becomes obvious that the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in the popular consciousness was affected in many ways. Once he became the object of iconographic presentation, his image was depicted differently at various times, and to meet various interests. From the time of his canonisation in 1547, the Orthodox Church in general described him as a Russian miracle-worker, an ascetic monk, who had lived an exemplary life serving his people with pious heart and mind. The tsars in Moscow hailed him as pious forefather who had, along with a whole 'staircase' of pious generations, prepared the way for the tsardom in Moscow, where his image was above all that of a victorious warrior. What Peter was interested in was the latter, but

³¹ Klimov 1996, 93–8.

disconnected from the emphasis on the Moscow great princely line, and redirected to the service of the state.

Other than visible images, pictorial representation in the icons, the written text continued to offer material for popular perceptions of the ideal warrior. One new aspect through which Aleksandr's image has been influenced since the time of Peter and the enlightenment is history writing, which ultimately replaced the hagiographic writings as the source of popular images. It also heightened the importance of historiography as a vehicle for the distribution of power. It is sometimes said that Russia has always been an object of state-centred historical writing.³² This tendency was already visible in the work of V. N. Tatishchev (1686–1750), and it continued in the milestones created by the nineteenth-century historians. It was Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin (1766–1826) who probably had the greatest influence on the descriptions of Aleksandr Nevskiy given in books of Russian history, for his magnum opus, the *History of the Russian State* (*Istoriya Gosudarstva Rossiiskogo*), was not only widely read at the time, but also ushered in a new era of Russian historical analysis. Karamzin's specialities were his literary skill and the aesthetic sensitivity which he brought to his history books. As a result, he had a profound influence not only on historians, but also on the most famous poets and writers of Russia's literary golden age, such as Aleksandr Pushkin and Feodor Dostoevskiy.³³

Karamzin's views on Aleksandr Nevskiy's actions came from the political manifestos of sixteenth-century Moscow, including the *Book of Degrees* and the *Nikon* and *Voskresenskaya* chronicles, and the *Life* of Aleksandr as given in these was one of his most important sources for his presentation of the history of thirteenth-century Russia.³⁴ The influence of these works was significant in shaping Karamzin's view of the Mongol conquest and of the idealisation of the image of self-sacrifice attached to the Russian princes. Just as the martyrdom of Mikhail of Chernigov was highlighted, so too the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy glorified the self-sacrificial aspect of the Russian great prince.³⁵

Karamzin also pointed to the dichotomy in the ways in which Aleksandr and his brother ruled their lands, contrasting the careless

³² See for example Jussila 1983.

³³ Vernadsky 1978, 45–9.

³⁴ Karamzin 1842, vol. 4, 5–58.

³⁵ See Karamzin 1842, vol. 4, 54.

rule of Andrey with the idealised, self-sacrificial and dedicated rule of Aleksandr, in exactly the same way as it had been emphasised in the 16th century, during the days of Ivan IV.³⁶ It was essential for Karamzin to acknowledge the right of the Russian monarchy to their autocratic rule at a time when demands for democracy were being raised all over Europe, including Russia. His vivid, psychologically well-presented and harmonious history underlined an emotional affection for the Russian sovereigns. As he lauded Aleksandr Nevskiy, he was presenting the ideal image of a Russian ruler *par excellence*: 'With his good exploits, Aleksandr could not do other than alleviate the cruel fate of Russia, and the sources which praise his memory show that the people can sometimes respect the personal merits of a ruler and not evaluate him merely on the external grandeur of his realm.'³⁷

Karamzin's *History of the Russian State* was published from 1829 to 1833, during the reign of Nikolai I, a time of national awakening and the genesis of the 'Russian idea'. The myth of Aleksandr and the Russian idea are connected even to this day, when one considers that Begunov, one of the leading authorities on the study of the hagiographies of Aleksandr Nevskiy, has argued that Aleksandr Nevskiy's image includes most of the basic ingredients of the Russian idea, such as high morals, loyalty to the fatherland, and faith in national salvation.³⁸ This idea was one of the key reasons why Stalin, in the 1930s, also picked him as one of the most admired leaders of Russian history. Aleksandr Nevskiy's position was exalted not only in schoolbooks, but particularly through the arts. One can even claim that the cooperation between Stalin and the film director Sergey Eisenstein launched a new direction in the cult of Aleksandr. This impression was confirmed by holding the première of the film *Aleksandr Nevskiy* on his former feast-day, 23 November, in 1938. Eisenstein's film stripped every inch of saintliness and Orthodox influence from Aleksandr and made him an epic hero with a secular emphasis on loyalty to the fatherland. Stalin involved himself very eagerly in the making of the film, and was so pleased with the result that he awarded Eisenstein the Order of Lenin.³⁹

³⁶ See Karamzin 1842, vol. 4, 44.

³⁷ See Karamzin 1842, vol. 4, 57.

³⁸ Begunov, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo* 1995, 169.

³⁹ Bordwell 1988, 155.

There exists a certain similarity between Peter's action in using St Prince Aleksandr as a moral shield against the Swedes at the beginning of the 18th century and Stalin using him again when threatened by an external enemy. The difference was that, for Stalin, the enemy was not the Swedes but the Germans. Consequently, Aleksandr Nevskiy was presented in Eisenstein's film fighting with the Teutonic Knights, and the armour and uniforms, as well as the gestures of the knights, were clearly allegorical references to the Nazi German army. This allegory established Aleksandr Nevskiy's position in the history books as the model for a hero who fought for the freedom of Russia, and he was seen as an inspiration for the Soviet soldiers.⁴⁰

When observing the long history of the development of the popular image of Aleksandr Nevskiy, it becomes evident that for the majority of historians today it differs little from the legend devised to suit the interests of the Russian Orthodox Church and the burgeoning imperial state in sixteenth-century Moscow.⁴¹ Crummey sees both the huge cultural productivity during the reign of Ivan IV and the pan-Christian ideological pretensions of the principality of Moscow as attempts to project political stability and the solidity of undisputed Orthodoxy, in order to satisfy not just the state but the Russian people as a whole.⁴² Indeed, the image of Aleksandr as a warrior-saint is unavoidably tied to the Russian national identity and its mission, and this image is so profoundly imprinted into the minds of historians as well, including the leading Russian medievalists, that Likhachev's words reveal something very essential about this emotional commitment to the past: 'Life is temporary but deeds are eternal, and these are judged by the nation and by history.'⁴³

This study has examined the development of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image, and has observed how it underwent constant development through the period called the Middle Ages. In the end, one of the most important aspects of his image was his merit as a defender of the Russian nation, a feature that is lacking from the early First Edition, which gives as guidance for his descendants merely the stiff and stereotyped image of an ideal ruler, invincible in war and just

⁴⁰ Sokolov 1995, 43; Begunov & Kirpichnikov 1995, 7; Likhachev 1995, 14.

⁴¹ Compare for example Pashuto 1975, 25–7.

⁴² Crummey 1987, 202.

⁴³ See Likhachev 1995, 14.

and merciful to his subjects. Because of the multidimensional image which developed through the centuries of the Russian medieval period, his image was exploited in Moscow and later, whenever the political situation of the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union demanded it. In 1990, when Leningrad (St Petersburg) celebrated the 750th anniversary of victory in the battle of the Neva, Patriarch Aleksiĭ II blessed the ground where the battle had taken place. The soil which he had blessed was then placed in a special box and solemnly taken to the *lavra* with a ceremonial military escort, and deposited beside the relics of Aleksandr Nevskiy. When blessing the battleground, Patriarch Aleksiĭ asked everyone to pray for all those who had given their lives for their fatherland.⁴⁴

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, a search for the 'Russian idea' began once again in the new, confusing situation. Boris Yeltsin appointed a team of philosophers, political scientists and other scholars to come up with a 'Russian idea'. The new economic situation found its model in the past, and the medieval city of Novgorod, which had significant features of democracy, was raised up as a new model with which to identify. The chairman of the group, Leonid Smiryagin, stated that 'our people often need to feel part of something big, a great process, the country itself.'⁴⁵ As the 'New Russia' wished to derive its spiritual strength from the past, it also set out to venerate the memory of its great warriors. In 1995 Yeltsin decreed that the birthday of Aleksandr Nevskiy was to be celebrated in churches in all the districts where he had exercised influence in his lifetime.⁴⁶ The veneration of Aleksandr Nevskiy is especially prominent in the important garrison city of Pskov, where the troops are blessed in the Church of Aleksandr Nevskiy before leaving for the front in Chechnya. At the same time, the 'great battle that suffocated the western aggression', Aleksandr's Battle on the Ice, is also commemorated nowadays in the same church, on 18 April, as a day of Russian military glory.

For the most part, modern Russian historical research into Aleksandr Nevskiy has been unable to distance itself from the patriotic mission in its reflections on the past. Begunov states, for example, that 'ancient Russian morals laid the foundations of Russia's history and for an

⁴⁴ Begunov & Kirpichnikov 1995, 9.

⁴⁵ Ford 1997.

⁴⁶ Selart 2000, 141.

element of historical memory in politics and culture.⁴⁷ Russian historical research has, in the main, preserved the same vision of history as permeated the ancient chronicles, in which written history does not describe separate events but rather conveys a holistic picture of the world. In this approach, historical events are important not for their own sake but rather as moral lessons, offering either warning or example for future generations. Thus, each era has taken advantage of its own history, emphasising—consciously or unconsciously—certain features which support its own moral values, justify its existence and indicate the direction of future development. Russian historians have therefore often acted merely like the medieval copyists of the chronicles, rewriting history over and over again according to the requirements of their own era. Nevertheless, a coherent and emotionally powerful image of Aleksandr Nevskiy—developed to its flowering during the great age of Muscovite imperial ascendancy—has, in all its harmony, hit on something that still appeals to the feelings of Russians well into this day.

⁴⁷ Begunov, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo* 1995, 170.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has searched for the roots of the heroic image of Prince Aleksandr Nevskiy, a heavenly defender of Russia and its Orthodox Church, by examining his medieval biography, the hagiographic *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy*, which can be considered as the main source of his long-standing popular image. The historical situation that prevailed in the Russian lands during the time of the birth of the *Life* has been approached from a wide perspective, allowing Aleksandr's image as projected in his *Life* to be studied according to the conventions that applied to the writing of historical narratives and princely eulogies at the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th centuries. The author of the *Life* was not only well acquainted with the medieval Russian patterns for composing a princely eulogy, but he also demonstrated the chivalric spirit that prevailed throughout Europe at the time of the Crusades. He was undoubtedly aiming at certain goals with his story of a pious and holy prince, and when searching for those goals, the main question concerns the way in which it fitted into the historical situation in Russia during Aleksandr's lifetime; for the most part the *Life* remains silent about the real historical occurrences and reveals relatively little. One crucial event in this sense is the Mongol conquest, which devastated the Russian lands from 1237 onwards: the *Life* basically concentrates on extolling Aleksandr's glorious victories over the Swedes and the Teutonic Knights in the west.

In the battle against the 'Roman king' at the River Neva, the narrator of the *Life* used a specific *topos* in which the hero confronts a mighty challenger, but is able to overcome him thanks to his own resourcefulness and superior physical skills. While this *topos* of *sapientia et fortitudo* was already familiar from the war tales of Antiquity and the Byzantine era, and was repeated in the popular legends of Alexander the Great and Digenes Akrites, the author also linked Aleksandr's heroic actions to biblical examples, so that in the episode of the battle of the Neva, Aleksandr is likened to Hezekiah, who confronted the King of Assyria when defending Jerusalem. This biblical model not only established Aleksandr's image as a saintly hero, the subject of a hagiography, but also made it possible for the author

to refer to the Mongol conquest, which was otherwise left unmentioned in the *Life*. Drawing a parallel between Aleksandr and Hezekiah ultimately made it possible to acknowledge the Mongol conquest of other Russian principalities, since Novgorod had been saved, as Jerusalem had been saved by the piety of Hezekiah when the remainder of Israel had been occupied by the Assyrians and taken into captivity.

The author used the imagery of the cycle of SS Boris and Gleb, and referred to the battles of their brother Yaroslav for rightful revenge and justice. He also used references to heavenly assistance which were familiar in connection with descriptions of battles against the Saracens during the crusades in the Holy Land. Skilfully combining these aspects with the tradition used in the Russian chronicles, he aimed to present a thorough account of how Prince Aleksandr was fighting a just war. The vision of Boris and Gleb before the battle of the Neva was a clear signal of this.

The local aspect of the *Life* of Aleksandr is carefully subordinated to the universal significance of his chivalry and justified defence. It is notable that the famous description of the battle of the Neva was totally independent of the local information available in the *Novgorod I Chronicle*. In the *Life*, it was not the courage of the men of Novgorod in defending their homes that was at issue, but the courage of Aleksandr, who was defending the lands represented as belonging to him according to his hereditary rights. The accusations made by the German knights and the Swedish king were thus depicted as insults to Aleksandr's chivalric honour, in that his enemies were claiming sovereignty over lands that rightfully belonged to Aleksandr. Historically, this goes beyond any Novgorodian concept of the position of its prince, and underlines the dynastic tradition of the great princely family of Vladimir.

One of the most powerful undercurrents in the descriptions of the battle of the Neva and the Battle on the Ice is connected to Aleksandr's dynastic claims to the throne of Pskov. This is shown in Aleksandr's words to the citizens of Pskov after the famous Battle on the Ice, advising them to cherish his memory. The Pskov chronicles mark Aleksandr's words even more directly as an entreaty to give refuge in Pskov to his descendants. The heir in question is his son Dmitriy, whose position is affirmed in the *Life*, as Aleksandr orders his army to serve Dmitriy as loyally and faithfully as it would serve himself. Pskov occupies a very complicated position in the *Life*, not only

because of its significance as the arena of Aleksandr's personal heroism, but also because of the eager use of Aleksandr's image in that city during later centuries. The narrative of the patron saint of Pskov, the *Life of Dovmont*, written in the 14th century, was based to a considerable extent on the *Life* of Prince Aleksandr, who liberated the city from the Teutonic Knights in 1241/2. It thus becomes evident that the city of Pskov cherished the memory of its liberator to some extent, although there is no sign that Aleksandr ever really had any cultic position there, for he is never mentioned as a saint in the wars of Pskov, unlike two other local military saints, Vsevolod-Gavriil and Dovmont, who are mentioned as patrons of the city in the Pskov chronicles in the 14th century. This can naturally be explained by the fact that Aleksandr's relics, the most important objects in the cult, were placed elsewhere.

The narration of the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* is very complex and has many dimensions. The combination of ascetic monk and courageous warrior, who confronts the Teutonic Knights and the arrogant western king on the battlefield, is interesting indeed. It seems that, together with the *Novgorod I Chronicle* and the *Life of Dovmont*, the *Life* of Aleksandr forms a link in the Russian counter-propaganda to the literature of the Teutonic Order, as all of the former conveyed a Russian perspective on battles that were glorified in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*. All these historical narratives originated during a relatively short period of 50 years. As pointed out in this study, based on the ideological message of the *Life* of Aleksandr, it was written at the end of the 13th century, most probably during the unstable rule of Dmitriy Aleksandrovich, who was challenged by his younger brother Andrey during the 1280s, or possibly even at the beginning of the 1290s. Consequently, the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* was written shortly after 1290. The 'third writer' of the Synodal manuscript of the *Novgorod I Chronicle* originated in the 1330s, and the *Life of Dovmont* approximately in the first half of the 14th century. It is thus evident that whatever propagandistic aims the *Life* had in its glorification of Aleksandr's martial skills, they were directed towards the western frontiers of Pskov and Novgorod.

The combination of martial hero and pious monk buried in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir remains important, because it seems that the monks of the monastery cherished this military legend, which was attached to the *Laurentian Chronicle* in 1377. It is usually argued that the *Life* of Aleksandr was written

in this same monastery soon after Aleksandr's death, under the supervision of Metropolitan Kirill. This study has, however, pointed out that there is no actual evidence to support the theory that Metropolitan Kirill moved from the service of Prince Daniil of Galicia to Vladimir, and stayed there as a loyal supporter of Prince Aleksandr from 1252 onwards. It is generally argued that because of Metropolitan Kirill's choice in favour of the Mongol conquerors he influenced the ideological message of the *Life*, which openly declared the pope's attempts to lure Prince Aleksandr to Catholicism to be doomed.

It can be shown, however, that the theory of Kirill's influence on the writing of the *Life*, elaborated above all by Dmitriy Likhachev and Yuriy Begunov, contains many *lacunae*. Firstly, the participation of Metropolitan Kirill in the writing of both the *Life* of Aleksandr and the *Galician Princely Chronicle* is based on speculations that have weak grounds, as argued in this study. There is no evidence to claim that the *pechatnik* Kirill who possibly wrote the *Chronicle of Daniil* is the same person who was later known as Metropolitan Kirill. Since the *Life* reveals a skilful mastering of medieval Russian literary etiquette rather than an eyewitness account, the supposedly close connection between the metropolitan and Prince Aleksandr can in no way be an argument in favour of the above-mentioned theory.

Secondly, and very inconsistently, the strong emphasis on a good ruler who can provide stability in society strongly suggests that the writing date of the *Life* can be traced to the period when Dmitriy Aleksandrovich had trouble keeping his position on the great princely throne, which left his dominions open to devastating fraternal feuds. This is the weakest point in the theory, because it ultimately leaves Metropolitan Kirill out of the potential writing candidates; he was already dead before the conflict between the brothers broke out. One can also criticise the great emphasis given to the division of the First Edition into two textual groups (according to the role of Aleksandr's brother, Yaroslav, during the military expedition to Yur'ev in 1262), as done by Begunov. There is no evidence that the *Life* was ever used for political purposes in Tver, which is understandable, because it does not offer suitable justification for dynastic claims by the descendants of Yaroslav Yaroslavich. It is therefore essential to distinguish that the copying process of the medieval manuscripts of the *Life* did not necessarily create intentional differences between the copies.

The basic purpose of the *Life* of Aleksandr seems evident and

downright simple. It has to be regarded as offering an image of a good ruler. Clearly the image of a righteous and good ruler was needed most when hard times fell and society lacked steady rule. As becomes clear from the content, the ruler to whom the *Life* was directed was Dmitriy, to whom Aleksandr—according to the *Life*—left his legacy. Rather than glorifying the arts of war, it is the longing for internal peace in society which is the driving force behind the *Life*, and this should be considered its leading theme. The importance of princely advice fits particularly well with the time after Dyuden's devastating campaign in 1293, when Great Prince Dmitriy Aleksandrovich escaped to Pskov, and Bishop Iakov of Vladimir wrote a letter to him, calling for a return to law and order in society. The importance of political asylum for Aleksandr's descendants is also well remembered in the Pskov chronicles. The central role of SS Boris and Gleb in the *Life* presents an example of brotherly love, appropriate to the situation when Andrey Aleksandrovich was challenging his older brother in the dynastic feud.

The birth of the *Life* of Aleksandr, depicting an ideal image of a virtuous ruler who took care of his people and led his soldiers to meet only foreign enemies, fits excellently with the period of internal troubles between Aleksandr's sons. The content of the *Life* verifies that it originated from Vladimir, since its view of the role of the prince differs considerably from that of Novgorod. In all likelihood the *Life* was born in the monastic circles of Vladimir, and was well known in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God, where Aleksandr was buried. Since the copyist of the *Laurentian Chronicle* in 1377, Lavrentiy, was a monk at this monastery, he must have known the legend from his monastic background, and included the *Life* for the first time as part of the historical content of the chronicle passage for the year of Aleksandr's death.

It seems that the *Life* of Aleksandr was not included in the 1305 Vladimirian chronicle edition, but was inserted by its copyist, Lavrentiy. This theory is also confirmed by the fact that it was lacking from the 1408 chronicle edition, preserved in the *Trinity Chronicle*. The development of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image in the Moscow great princely chronicles began only later, in the Moscow chronicle edition of 1480. It was around that time that the *Life* was also inserted into the Pskov chronicles. Instead, it appears that interest in the hero of the Neva battle was active in Novgorod, since passages from the First Edition of the *Life* were included in the *Novgorod I Chronicle* in

its younger version around 1423. Thus the *Life* started to affect the common historical consciousness, the images of the past, as the chronicle augmented the *Life* with local information when placing the events described in it into the historical framework that it already contained.

After the legend had been adopted into the historical setting of the medieval chronicles it took various shapes, because, like images in general, Aleksandr's image of an ideal prince was also interactive. The image of Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich given in his *Life* was influenced by other historical narratives, and it also affected other narratives. The dual image of Aleksandr from the time when the First Edition of the *Life* was written, which connected the spiritual, Christian ideal of a pious ruler with the concept of an excellent warrior, was the feature that prevailed throughout the medieval period. This dualism was no doubt one of the reasons for the popularity and longevity of his legend. Each author could choose to stress one or other of these features, as was brilliantly done in the Second Edition of the *Life*, which was probably written in the 14th century, and was interpolated into some of the most influential fifteenth-century chronicles. The idealism of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image gave room for new characterisations regarded as ideal by the community, and the most significant feature of the Second Edition was its combination with the image of Mikhail of Chernigov, a prince who voluntarily suffered in the Golden Horde on behalf of his people.

One of the most important manifestations of the development of Aleksandr Nevskiy's image was the fifteenth-century *Sophia I Chronicle*, which not only contained interpolations from the Second Edition of the *Life*, but also expressed a very strong ideology directed against the Mongol control which was laid on the Russian principalities. It confronted the eastern threat through texts from the Kulikovo cycle, in which Aleksandr Nevskiy played a leading role as a model for the great prince of Moscow, Dmitriy Ivanovich, the triumphant hero of the battle of Kulikovo in 1380. Through the altered image of the Second Edition, Aleksandr was transformed into a martyr-like example of a Russian prince who voluntarily suffered at the hands of the Mongols in the Golden Horde. With this change in his image, the blade of his spear came to be morally directed not only against the western, but also against the eastern intruders. As he was depicted in the *Life* according to the model of the biblical heroes who confronted the eastern tribes, his example fitted well with the heroic

image of Dmitriy Ivanovich, who, unlike Aleksandr, actually accomplished this task. By miraculously influencing Dmitriy's glorious victory over the accursed Mamai on the Kulikovo Field, Aleksandr Nevskiy finally confronted the eternal enemy of God's chosen people, the eschatological eastern tribe known as the descendants of Hagar and her son, Ishmael.

Although the *Life* of Aleksandr was one of the key examples for the deeds of Dmitriy Ivanovich, as presented in the literature of the Kulikovo cycle, it was not until after his canonisation in 1547 that the first signs of the strengthening of his cultic status could be perceived. Although it is often claimed that he was canonised locally immediately after the victory of Kulikovo, there are no contemporary sources confirming this. This study demonstrates how all the theories of local canonisation in Vladimir are based on inadequate grounds, source material referring to his cultic position being ultimately from a much later period. The whole Kulikovo cycle can be considered to be of later origin, and its most elaborate tales developed only during the next century, the 15th, when they were also taken into some of the great chronicles, such as the *Sophia I* and *Novgorod IV* chronicles. These nurtured a new kind of historical consciousness, and also incorporated the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* as part of their historical narrative. While the *Life* was reflected in the greater historical context, and for its part formed a considerable milestone in the written history, it was also given local variants. The *Novgorod IV Chronicle* harnessed his legend to the battle against the Swedes, while the Pskov chronicles left the story to act as a form of introduction to the *Life* of their own hero, Prince Dovmont, which significantly strengthened the identity and spirit of Pskov from the 15th century onwards.

The year 1547, however, was a turning point in the cult of Aleksandr Nevskiy. Once he had been officially canonised as a miracle-worker for the whole of Russia, he became one of the saints whose existence testified to the primary position of the Russian Church among the Orthodox Churches. This also placed new expectations on his hagiography. Several new editions of the *Life* were written, and the first of them, the *Slovo Pokhval'noe*, was incorporated into the Moscow editions of Metropolitan Makariy's *Great Menology*, so that the Uspenskiy edition of 1550 had a sizeable list of the miraculous acts of healing that had been witnessed at the relics of the new miracle-worker. It also established the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy as

the heavenly protector of the great prince of Moscow, an aspect derived from the miracle concerning the heavenly assistance given to his descendant Dmitriy Donskoy at the battle of Kulikovo. The ancestors of Tsar Ivan were venerated in Moscow as an important imperial lineage descended from the Second Constantine, Prince Vladimir of Kiev, who baptised the people of the Russian lands. The reasons behind Aleksandr's image as a heavenly warrior can no doubt be traced to Ivan's personal involvement in the expansion of his Orthodox realm into the territory of the eastern Muslim tribes of Kazan, no less than to official veneration of the position of Moscow's great princes by stressing their holy roots.

The pressure exerted on the old narrative led to several revisions of the *Life*, for which the chronicle adaptations functioned as the basic sources. Here again the same dual interest that had been detectable during the development of the First Edition was present, and both the western border principality of Pskov and the heart of the princely cult in Vladimir witnessed the further development of the legend that had arisen over two centuries ago. The first of the new editions, the above-mentioned *Slovo Pokhval'noe*, was obviously written in Vladimir, where the relics of Prince Aleksandr were kept, but another important edition of his *Life* was written very soon afterwards in Pskov.

While the *Slovo Pokhval'noe* had preserved the narrative of the First Edition almost untouched, the Pskovian edition of Vasilii-Varlaam took decisive steps in revising the style of writing in accordance with the developments which had taken place in chronicle writing during the intervening centuries. Vasilii-Varlaam adopted the image of the Mongols as hostile and violent, a view that was manifested more and more openly during the 15th century as an integral part of the *Life* of Aleksandr, and this became a constant feature repeated in every subsequent edition, including that incorporated into the *Book of Degrees*. The author of the *Life* as contained in the *Book of Degrees* is not known, but Vasilii-Varlaam's edition no doubt provided a powerful example of how Prince Aleksandr could be treated as a loyal servant of his people, showing features of personal self-sacrifice in confronting the khans of the Golden Horde, a virtue that he shared with other thirteenth-century princes such as his father, Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, and Mikhail of Chernigov.

The Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir remained a centre for literary work, consisting of the reworking of

the hagiography and the production of new editions. One of the most widely expanded versions was the edition of Iona Dumin, written just before the end of the 16th century and before the devastating chaos of the Time of Troubles, when political disturbance and instability, wars and civil unrest brought great distress to the people both physically and spiritually, as the political life of Moscow was affected by the struggles between various aspirants to the throne. Aleksandr Nevskiy nevertheless preserved his position as an honourable forefather, and he was commemorated with churches and icons during the times of the next dynasty of tsars, the Romanovs, while the raped and ravaged lands of Novgorod and Pskov remembered him as the ancient defender of the Russian borderlands against invasions by the Swedes.

Thus, as the historical narrative of Aleksandr Nevskiy developed during the Middle Ages, the features that were attached to it became an integral part of the representation of the myth of a heroic defender. Even though the First Edition of the *Life* was well preserved and survived in several sixteenth-century manuscripts, it was inevitably the image projected by the new editions that spread in the popular consciousness and remained alive and fresh, making it easy for this to be adopted and absorbed into wider concepts of history, religion, and world order. It was on these medieval foundations that the popular image of Aleksandr as the ideal prince, defending his people, Russia and the Orthodox faith, was based. Historians making use of the huge source of medieval history contained in the chronicles discovered Prince Aleksandr Yaroslavich mostly in the pages of the sixteenth-century chronicles of Moscow, which preserved the official history for the era of the culmination of the Ryurikovichi myths of the imperial destiny of the tsars.

As the image of Aleksandr Nevskiy developed through the Middle Ages into one of the heavenly defenders of the Moscow state, it was well guarded by later generations. When Peter the Great transferred the cultic centre from the city of Vladimir to his new capital, St Petersburg, Aleksandr's image was also changed to fit better into Peter's new state ideology. The reworking of the image of the heavenly protector of Russia continued during the 19th century's romanticism, when the Orthodox tradition of the Russian past became an important feature strengthening the national Russian movement. This was the time when influential historians like Karamzin offered a polished image of a devout great prince, using sixteenth-century chron-

icles and the *Book of Degrees* as his main sources. As the *Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy* offered this self-sacrificial image of a prince with epic simplicity, it was also easy to use as a patriotic ideal during the time of the Second World War. This search for a moral example in defending Russia has been preserved well into modern Russia, which is once again eagerly lifting up the memory of Aleksandr Nevskiy.

ABBREVIATIONS

JfGO	Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas
PLDR	Pamyatniki literatury drevney Rusi
PSRL	Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisey
SEER	Slavonic and East European Review
SKiKDR	Slovar' knizhnikov i knizhnosti drevney Rusi
TODRL	Trudy otdela drevnerusskoy literatury

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Printed Sources

Editions of the Life of Aleksandr Nevskiy

- Povesti o zhitii i o khrabrosti blagovernago velikogo knyazya Oleksandra, in Yu. K. Begunov, *Pamyatnik russkoy literatury XIII veka 'Slovo o pogibeli russkoy zemli'*, Moskva 1965.
- Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo, podgotovka teksta, perevod i kommentary V. I. Okhotnikovoy, in *PLDR XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
- Spisok vtoroy redaktsii po rukopisu gr. Uvarova, no 214, in V. Mansikka, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo. Razbor redaktsii i tekst'*, Sankt Peterburg 1913, reprinted in Leiptzig 1984.
- Spisok 'Vladimirskoy redaktsii' zhiitiya, izvlechennennyy iz Makar'evskikh Mineychetikh, po uspenskomy spisku, in V. Mansikka, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo. Razbor redaktsii i tekst'*, Sankt Peterburg 1913, reprinted in Leiptzig 1984.
- Spisok redaktsii Vasiliya-Varlaama po rukopisi Imp. Publichnoy biblioteki, Drevnekhranilishcha Pogodina, no 648, in V. Mansikka, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo. Razbor redaktsii i tekst'*, Sankt Peterburg 1913, reprinted in Leiptzig 1984.
- Spisok redaktsii Iony Dumina po rukopisi Moskovskoy Tipografskoy biblioteki, no 346, in V. Mansikka, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo. Razbor redaktsii i tekst'*, Sankt Peterburg 1913, reprinted in Leiptzig 1984.
- Likhachevskaya redaktsiya, in V. Mansikka, *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo. Razbor redaktsii i tekst'*, Sankt Peterburg 1913, reprinted in Leiptzig 1984.

Russian Chronicles

- Lavrent'evskaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 1*, Sankt Peterburg 1846.
- Ipat'evskaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 2*, Sankt Peterburg 1843.
- Novgorodskaya tret'ya letopis', *PSRL Tom 3*, Sankt Peterburg 1841.
- Novgorodskaya chetvertaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 4*, Sankt Peterburg 1848.
- Sofiyskaya pervaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 5*, Sankt Peterburg 1851.
- Voskresenskaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 7*, Sankt Peterburg 1856.
- Nikonovskaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 10*, Sankt Peterburg 1885.
- Nikonovskaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 11*, Sankt Peterburg 1897.
- Nikonovskaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 12*, Sankt Peterburg 1901.
- Tverskoy sbornik, *PSRL Tom 15*, Moskva 1965.
- Rogozhkiy letopisets, *PSRL Tom 15*, Moskva 1965.
- Simeonovskaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 18*, Sankt Peterburg 1913.
- Stepennaya kniga, *PSRL Tom 21:1*, Sankt Peterburg 1908.
- Stepennaya kniga, *PSRL Tom 21:2*, Sankt Peterburg 1913.
- Moskovskiy letopisnyi svod koncha XV veka, *PSRL Tom 25*, Moskva 1949.
- Novgorodskaya Karamzinskaya letopis', *PSRL Tom 42*, Sankt Peterburg 2002.

- Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis', *PLDR XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
- Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', starshii izvod, in *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis' starshego i mladshego izvodov*, pod. red. A. N. Nasonova i M. N. Tikhomirova, Moskva 1950.
- Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis', mladshii izvod, in *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis' starshego i mladshego izvodov*, pod. red. A. N. Nasonova i M. N. Tikhomirova, Moskva 1950.

- Troitskaya letopis'*, *rekonstruktsiya teksta*, M. D. Priselkov, Moskva 1950.
Povest' vremennykh let, podgotovka teksta, perevod, stat'i i kommentarii D. S. Likhacheva, Sankt Peterburg 1996.
 Pskovskaya pervaya letopis', in *Pskovskie letopisi*, *Vyp. 1*, pod. red. A. N. Nasonova, Moskva 1941.
 Pskovskaya vtoraya letopis', in *Pskovskie letopisi*, *Vyp. 2*, pod. red. A. N. Nasonova, Moskva 1955.
 Pskovskaya tret'ya letopis', in *Pskovskie letopisi*, *Vyp. 2*, pod. red. A. N. Nasonova, Moskva 1955.

Other Russian sources

- Aleksandriya, in *'Izbornik'. Sbornik proizvedeniy literatury drevney Rusi*, Moskva 1969.
 Deyanie prezhykh vremen khrabrykh chelovek, in Kuz'mina, V. D. *Devenievo deyanie*, Moskva 1962.
Ikonopisniy podlinnik novgorodskoy redaktsii po Sofyiskomu spisku kontsa XVI veka s variantom iz spiskov Zabelina i Filimonova, Moskva 1873.
Ikonopisniy podlinnik novg. Ryad. po sokhr. spisku XVI v., Moskva 1878.
 Kazanskaya istoriya, in *PLDR seredina XVI veka*, Moskva 1985.
 Letopisnaya povest' o Kulikovskoy bitve, in *PLDR. XIV-seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
 Molenie Daniila Zatochnika, in *Literatura drevney Rusi. Khrestomatiya*. Sost. L. A. Dmitriev, pod. red. D. S. Likhacheva, Sankt Peterburg 1997.
Podlinnik ikonopisnyy, pod. red. A. I. Uspenskogo, Moskva 1893.
Poslaniya Iosifa Volotskogo, pod. red. A. A. Zimina, Moskva 1959.
 Povest' o vzyatii Tsar'grada krestonostsami v 1204 godu, in *PLDR XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
 Povest' o nashestvii Tokhtamysha, in *PLDR XIV-seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
 Povest' o novgorodskom belom klobuke, in *PLDR Seredina XVI veka*, Moskva 1985.
 Povest' o bitve na Lipitse, in *PLDR XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
 Rukopisanie Magnusha, in *PLDR XIV-seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
 Skazanie ob ubienii v Orde knyazya Mikhaila Chernigovskogo i ego boyarina Feodora, in *PLDR XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
 Skazanie o Dovmonte, according to manuscript from Pogodin collection, no 1413, published in *PLDR XIV-seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
 Skazanie o Drakule, in *Literatura drevney Rusi. Khrestomatiya*, sost. L. A. Dmitriev, pod. red. D. S. Likhacheva, Sankt Peterburg 1997.
 Skazanie o knyaz'yakh Vladimirsikh, in *Literatura drevney Rusi. Khrestomatiya*, sost. L. A. Dmitriev, pod. red. D. S. Likhacheva, Sankt-Peterburg 1997.
 Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche, in *PLDR XIV-seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
 Skazanie o nashestvii Edigeya, in *PLDR XIV-seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
 Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli, in *PLDR, XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
 Slovo o polku Igoreve, in *PLDR XII vek*, Moskva 1980.
 Slovo o zakone i blagodatii Ilariona, in *Literatura drevney Rusi. Khrestomatiya*, sost. L. A. Dmitriev, pod. red. D. S. Likhacheva, Sankt Peterburg 1997.
 Slovo o zhitii velikogo knyaza Dmitrya Ivanovicha, in *PLDR. XIV-seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
 Zadonshchina, in *PLDR. XIV-seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.

Other sources

- 'Aperuit Dominus oculos tuae', a letter of Pope Innocent IV to Prince Aleksandr, addressed to 'Alexandro illustri regi Nongardiae', Datum Lugduni XVII Kal. Oct. anno VI. Published by G. Roshko, Innokentiy IV i ugroza tataro-mongol'skogo nashestviya: Poslaniya Papy Rimskogo Daniilu Galitskomu i Aleksandru Nevskomu, in *Simvol. Zhurnal khristianskoy kul'turu pri Slavyanskoy biblioteke v Parizhe*. Dekabr' 1988.

- Chanson d' Antioche*, vol. 1, ed. by Lewis A. M. Sumberg, Paris 1968.
- Erikskrönikan*, ed. Rolf Pipping, Samlingar utg. av Svenska Fornskrift. Sällskapet, vol. 158, Uppsala 1921.
- Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, vol. 1, ed. Reinhold Hausen, Helsingfors 1910.
- Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum, in *The Deeds of the Franks and Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, ed. by Rosalind Hill, Oxford 1979.
- Giovanni di Pian di Carpine, *Historia Mongalorum*. Biblioteca del centro per il collegamento degli studi medievali e umanistici del Università di Perugia, Spoleto 1989.
- Grottaferrata version of the Tale of Digenes Akrites, in *Digenes Akrites*, ed. with an introduction, translation and commentary by John Mavrogordato, first printed 1959, Oxford 1999.
- Historica Russiae Monumenta*, Ex antiquis exterarum gentium archivis et bibliothecis de prompta ab A. J. Turgenevo, Tom I, Petropoli 1841.
- Horsey, Sir Jerome, Travels, in *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom. Russia in the Accounts of Sixteenth-century English Voyagers*, ed. by Lloyd E. Berry & Robert O. Crummey, Madison 1968.
- Joinville's Chronicle of the crusade of St. Lewis, in Villehardouin & de Joinville, *Memoirs of the Crusades*. Transl. and introduced by Sir Frank Marzials, first included in Everyman's Library in 1908, last reprinted 1965.
- Liv-, Est- und Curländisches Urkundebuch*, vol. I, ed. Friedrich Georg von Bunge, Reval 1853.
- Die Livländische Reimchronic*, ed. Leo Mayer, Paderborn 1876.
- 'Pater futuri seculi', a letter of Pope Innocent IV to Prince Aleksandr, addressed to 'Alendro Duc Susdaliensi', Datum Lugduni X Kal. Febr. anno V, published in *Historica Russiae Monumenta*, Ex antiquis exterarum gentium archivis et bibliothecis deprompta ab A. J. Turgenevo, Tom I, Petropoli 1841.
- Rerum Moscoviticarum Commentarii*, transl. and ed. by R. H. Major, London 1851–2.
- A short history of the beginnings and origins of these present wars in Moscow under the reign of various sovereigns down to the year 1610 by Isaac Massa*, transl. and with an introduction by G. Edward Orchard, University of Toronto Press 1982.
- The Song of Roland*, transl. and with an introduction and notes by Glynn Burgess, New York 1990.
- Saga of Håkon Håkonsson, an excerpt translated into Russian by T. N. Jackson in *Svyatoy i blagovernyy velikiy knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy. Zhizneopisaniya, fakty i gipotezy, portrety i dokumenty v 30 knigakh rossiskie sud'by*, Moskva 1998.
- Translation of the Syriac text of Pseudo-Methodius from Cod. Vat. Syr. 28, in Paul J. Abrahamse, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, ed. with an introduction by Dorothy deF. Abrahamse, Berkeley 1985.

Literature

- Abrahamse, Dorothy deF., Introduction, in Paul J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, ed. and with an introduction by Dorothy de F. Abrahamse, Berkeley 1985.
- Adrianova-Perets, V. P., *Ocherki poeticheskogo stilya drevney Rusi*, Moskva 1947.
- Alenius, Kari, *Ahkeruus, edistys, ylimielisyys. Virolaisten Suomi-kuva kansallisen heräämisen ajasta tsaarinvallan päättymiseen (n. 1850–1917)*, Jyväskylä 1996.
- Alexander, Paul J., *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, ed. and with an introduction by Dorothy deF. Abrahamse, Berkeley 1985.
- Alter, Robert, *The David Story. Translation with Commentary of 1 and 2 Samuel*, New York 2000.
- Anaszewich, Gerard, Early coinage of Moscow, <http://www.ece.iit.edu/~prh/coins/PiN/ecm.html> 8.10.2001.

- Andreev, N., Filofey and his epistle to Ivan Vasilyevich, *SEER* 38, 1959.
- Angermann, Norbert, Livländisch-russische Beziehungen im Mittelalter, in *Wolter von Plettenberg und das mittelalterliche Livland*, Herausgegeben von Norbert Angermann und Ilgvars Masans, Lüneburg 2001.
- De Anna, Luigi, Kuvatutkimuksen käyttö tekstianalysissä, in *Työkalut rivin. Näkökulmia yleisen historian tutkimusmenetelmiin*, ed. Eero Kuparinen. Turun yliopiston historian laitos, julkaisuja no. 43, Turku 1997.
- Antonova, V. I., & Mneva, N. E., *Katalog drevnerusskoy zhivopisi XI-nachala XVIII vv. v drukh tomakh, Tom, vtoroy, XVI-nachalo XVIII veka*. Gosudarstvennaya Tret'yagovskaya galleriya, Moskva 1963.
- Attwater, Donald, *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints*, New York 1979.
- Auerbach, Erich, *Literary Audience and its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge 1956, repr. 1967.
- Bagge, Sverre, *The Political Thought of the King's Mirror*, Odense 1987.
- Barsov, E. V., Drevne-russkie pamyatniki svyashchennogo ventchaniya tsarey na tsarstvo, in *Chteniya v Obschestve istorii i drevnostey Rossiyskikh pri Moskovskom universite, vol. 124, tom. 1*, 1883.
- Bartlett, Robert, *The Making of Europe. Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950–1350*, Penguin Press 1993.
- Beaton, Roderick, *The Medieval Greek Romance*, Cambridge 1989.
- Beckman, Bjarne, *Matts Kättilmundsson och hans tid, vol. 2, 1319–1329*, Stockholm 1953.
- Begunov, Yu. K., Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo v sostave Novgorodskoy 1-oy i Sofiyskoy 1-oy letopisey, in *Novgorodskiy istoricheskiy sbornik, vypusk 9*, Novgorod 1959.
- , *Pamyatnik russkoi literatury XIII veka. Slovo o pogibeli russkoy zemli*, Moskva 1965.
- , Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo v Stankovoy zhivopisi nachala XVII v. in *TODRL* 22, 1966.
- , Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo, in “*Izbornik*.” *Sbornik proizvedeniy literatury drevney Rusi*, Moskva 1969.
- , Kogda Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo voshla v sostav' Lavrent'evskoy letopisi? in *Slavic Welt, band 16*, 1971.
- , Drevnerusskie traditsii v proizvedeniyah pervoy chetverti XVIII v. ob Aleksandre Nevskom, in *TODRL* 26, 1971.
- , Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo v Russkoy literature XII–XVIII vekov, in *Knyaz' Aleksander Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- , Russkie istochniki o Nevskoy bitve. Neskol'ko zamechaniy po povodu doklada Dzhona Linda, in *Knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*. Pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- , Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo, in *Knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- , Ikonografiya svyatogo blagovernogo velikogo knyazya Aleksandra Nevskogo, in *Knyaz' Aleksander Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- , Istochniki i biografiya. Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo pervaya redaktsiya, in *Knyaz' Aleksander Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- , Letopis' zhizni i deyatelnosti Aleksandra Nevskogo, in *Knyaz' Aleksander Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- Begunov, Yu. K., & Kirpichnikov, A. N., Ot redaktorov, in *Knyaz' Aleksander Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.

- Beletskiy, S. V., & Satyreva, D. N., Pskov i Orden v pervoy treti XIII veka, in *Knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- Bessov, E., Kaleki perekhozhie, in *Sbornik stikhov i issledovanie, Pt. 1, vyp. 3*. Moskva 1861–4.
- Billington, James H., *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture*, New York 1970.
- Birnbaum, Henrik, *Lord Novgorod the Great: Essays in the History and Culture of a Medieval City-state. The Historical Background*, Slavica, Columbus 1981.
- Bliese, John R. E., Rhetoric and morale: a study of battle orations from the Central Middle Ages, in *Journal of Medieval History* 15, 1989.
- Blom, Conny, *Förbindelsedikten och de medeltida rimkrönikorna*, Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis XXVIII, Lund 1972.
- Bobrov, A. G., *Novgorodskie letopisi XV veka*. Sankt Peterburg 2001.
- Bodin, Arne, *Ryssland och Europa: En kulturhistorisk studie*, Stockholm 1993.
- Bogatyrev, Sergei, *The Sovereign and his Counsellors: Ritualised Consultations in Muscovite Political Culture, 1350's–1570's*, The Finnish academy of science and letters, ser. Humaniora, Tom 307, Saarijärvi 2000.
- Bordwell, David, *The Cinema of Eisenstein*, Cambridge 1993.
- Bosley, Richard D., The saints of Novgorod: à propos of A. S. Choroshev's Book on the Church in medieval Novgorod, in *JfGO, Band 32, Heft 1*, 1984.
- Boulding, Kenneth E., *The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society*, first printed 1956, University of Michican Press 1973.
- Broughton, Bradford B., *The Legends of King Richard I Coeur de Lion: A Study of Sources and Variations to the Year 1600*, Paris 1966.
- Bulanin, D. M., Povest' o bitve na Kalke, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Zhitie Sergiya Radonezhskogo, in *PLDR XIV–seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
- , Iona Dumin, *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1988.
- Burgess, Glynn, Introduction, in *The Song of Roland*, New York 1990.
- Burke, Kenneth, *Attitudes Toward History*, 3. ed., Berkeley 1984.
- Burrow, J. A., *Medieval Writers and Their Work. Middle English Literature and its Background 1100–1500*, Oxford 1982.
- Bortnes, Jostein, *Visions of Glory. Studies in Early Russian Hagiography*, English translation Jostein Bortnes & Paul L. Nielsen, Slavica Norvegica V, Oslo 1988.
- , The Literature of Old Russia, 988–1730, in *The Cambridge History of Russian Literature*, ed. by Charles A. Moser, first published 1989, revised edition reprinted Cambridge University Press 1996.
- Camille, Michael, *The Gothic Idol. Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art*, Cambridge 1989.
- Cary, George, *The Medieval Alexander*, Cambridge University Press 1956, reprinted 1967.
- Cederschiöld, Gustaf, *Om Erikskrönikan. Ett Historiskt epos från folkungatiden*, Populärt vetenskapliga föreläsningar vid Göteborgs högskola XI, Göteborg 1899.
- Chadwick, H. Munro, & Chadwick, N. Kershaw, *The Growth of Literature*, Cambridge University Press 1936, reprinted 1986.
- Cherepnin, L. V., Letopisets Daniila Galitskogo, in *Istoricheskie zapiski, no 12*, Moskva 1941.
- Cherniavsky, Michael, *Tsar and People. Studies in Russian Myths*, New Haven 1961.
- Chernysheva, T., Kompozitsiya 'Digenisa Akrita' i 'Devgenievo deyanie', in *TODRL* 42, 1989.
- Cherry, John, Medieval and post medieval seals, in *7000 Years of Seals*, ed., by Dominique Collon, Cambridge University Press 1991.
- Crummey, Robert, *The Formation of Muscovy 1304–1613*, London 1987.

- Curtius, Ernst Robert, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, transl. from German by Willard R. Trask, London 1953.
- Danilevskiy, I. N., *Russkie zemli glazami sovremennikov i potomkov (XII–XIV vv.)*, *Kurs lektsiy*, Moskva 2000.
- Delehaye, H., *Les passions des martyrs et les genres littéraires*. Brüssels 1921.
- Deloos, Pierre, Towards a sociological study of canonized sainthood in the Catholic Church, in *Saints and their cults: Studies in religious sociology, folklore and history*, ed. by Stephen Wilson, Cambridge 1983.
- Demkova, N. S., Rukopisanie Magnusha, in *PLDR XIV–seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
- Derzhavin, N. S., ‘Stepennaya kniga’ kak literaturnyy istochnik: *Opyt issled. literaturnogo sostava ‘stepennoy knigi’ G. Millera*, Batum 1902.
- Dietze, Joachim, *The First Novgorod Chronicle in its Oldest Version (Synodal Transcript) 1016–1333/1352*, München 1971.
- Dmitriev, L. A., Zadonschina, in *PLDR XIV–seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
- , Skazanie o Mamaevom poboische, in *PLDR XIV–seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
- , Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Zadonschina, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, *chast’ 1*, Leningrad 1988.
- , Skazanie o Mamaevom poboische, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, *chast’ 2*, Leningrad 1989.
- , Molenie Daniila Zatochnika, in *Literatura drevney Rusi. Khrestomatiya*, sost. L. A. Dmitrev, pod. red. D. S. Likhacheva, Sankt Peterburg 1997.
- Dmitriev, L. A., & Lur’e, Ya. S., & Tvorogov, O. V., Belletristicheskie elementy v istoricheskom povestvovanii XIV–XV vv. in *Istoki russkoy belletristiki: Vozniknovenia zhanrov sjuzhetnogo povestvovaniya v drevnerusskoy literature*, Leningrad 1970.
- Dmitrieva, R. P., Vasilii, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, *chast’ 1*, Leningrad 1988.
- , Skazanie o knyaz’yakh Vladimirskikh, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, *chast’ 2*, Leningrad 1989.
- , Spiridon-Savva, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, *chast’ 2*, Leningrad 1989.
- , Agiograficheskaya shkola mitropolita Makariya (na materiale nekotorykh zhi-tiy), in *TODRL 48*, 1993.
- Donner, G. A., *Kardinal Wilhelm von Sabina. Bischof von Modena 1222–1234: Päpstlicher Legat in den Nordischen Ländern*, Helsingfors 1929.
- Droblenkova, N. F., Skazanie o nashestvii Edigeiya, in *PLDR XIV–seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
- , Velikie Minei Chetii, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, *chast’ 1*, Leningrad 1988.
- Dukes, Paul, *The Making of Russian Absolutism*, London 1982.
- Ebbinghaus, Andreas, Reception and ideology in the literature of Muscovite Rus’, in *Culture and Identity in Muscovy in 1359–1584*, eds A. M. Kleimola & G. D. Lenhoff, Moscow 1997.
- Eco, Umberto, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, transl. by Hugh Bredin, New Haven 1986.
- Eisenstein at Ninety*, eds Ian Christie & David Elliot, Oxford 1988.
- Enin, G. P., Iov, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, *chast’ 2*, Leningrad 1989.
- Estlander, Carl Gustav, *Richard Lejonhjerta i historien och poesin*, Akademisk afhandling, Helsingfors 1858.
- Farmer, David H., *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, Oxford 1987.
- Fedotov, G. P., *The Russian Religious Mind, Vol. I: Kievan Christianity, the Tenth to the Thirteenth Centuries*, first printed 1946, second printing Cambridge 1966.

- , *The Russian Religious Mind, Vol. II: The Middle Ages, the Thirteenth to the Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. with a foreword by John Meyendorf, Cambridge 1966.
- Fennell, John L. I., The Tver uprising of 1327: A study of the sources, in *JfGO*, Band 15, Heft 2, 1967.
- , *The Emergence of Moscow 1304–1359*, London 1968.
- , Andrej Jaroslavich and the struggle for power in 1252: An investigation of the sources, in *Russia Mediaevalis, Tomus 1*, eds John Fennell, Ludolf Müller, & Andrzej Poppe, München 1973.
- , *The Crisis of Medieval Russia 1200–1304*, London 1983.
- , The canonization of Saint Vladimir, in *Tausend Jahre Christentum in Russland*, red. Wolfgang Heller, Göttingen 1988.
- Fennell, J., & Stokes, A., *Early Russian Literature*, London 1974.
- Fisher, Mary, Biblical heroes and the uses of literature, in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray, Ashgate 2001.
- Ford, Peter, Medieval city holds key to 'Russian idea', in *Christian Monitor*, vol. 89 05/06 1997.
- Formozov, A. A., & Zimin A. A., 'Slovo o polku Igoreve' (fragmenty knigi), in *Voprosy istorii* 6–7, 1992.
- Froyanov, I. Ya., O knyazheskoy vlasti v Novgorode IX–pervoy poloviny XIII veka, in *Knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- Fuhrman, Joseph T., Metropolitan Cyril II (1242–1281) and the politics of accommodation, in *JfGO* 24, 1976.
- Fält, Olavi K., *Eksotismista realismiin. Perinteinen Japanin-kuva Suomessa 1930–luvun murroksessa*, Studia historica septentrionalia 5, Jyväskylä 1982.
- , Global History, Cultural Encounters and Images, in *Between National Histories and Global History*, eds Stein Tønneson, Juhani Koponen, Niels Steensgaard & Thommy Svensson, Historiallinen arkisto 110:4. FHS, Helsingfors 1997.
- Gippius, A. A., K istorii slozheniya teksta Novgorodskoy pervoy letopisi, in *Novgorodskiy istoricheskiy sbornik* 6(16), Sankt Peterburg 1997.
- , K kharakteristike novgorodskogo vladychnogo letopisaniya XII–XIV vv. in *Velikiy Novgorod v istorii srednevekovoy Evropy. K 70–letiyu Valentina Lavret'evicha Yanina*, Moskva 1999.
- Goldblatt, Harvey, Confessional and national identity in early Muscovite literature: The discourse on the Life and death of Dimitrii Ivanovich Donskoi, in *Culture and Identity in Muscovy 1359–1584*, eds A. M. Kleimola & G. D. Lenhoff, Moscow 1997.
- Golubinskiy, E., *Istoriya kanonizatsii svyatykh' v' russkoy tserkvi*, Moskva 1903.
- Goodich, Mikhail, Politics of canonization in the thirteenth century: lay and mendicant saints, in *Saints and Their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History*, ed. by Stephen Wilson, Cambridge 1983.
- Gorskiy, A. A., O kontaktakh Aleksandra Nevskogo s Rimom, in *Vostochnaya Evropa v drevnosti i srednevekov'e. Rus' v sisteme etnopoliticheskikh svyazey*, Moskva 1994.
- , Dva 'neudobnykh' fakta iz biografii Aleksandra Nevskogo, in *Aleksandr Nevskiy i istoriya Rossii*, Novgorod 1996.
- Grabmüller, Hans-Jürgen, *Die Pskover Chroniken: Untersuchungen zur russischen Regionalchronistik im 13.–15. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden 1975.
- Graham, H. F., The Tale of Devgeni. *Byzantinoslavica: International Journal of Byzantine Studies*, vol. 29, 1968.
- Granberg, Jonas, The Sovet Gospod of Novgorod, in Russian and German sources, in *JfGO* 47, Heft 3, 1999.
- Granger, Ryan, & Ripperger, Helmut, *The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine*. New Hampshire 1987.
- Grégoire, H., *Digenes Akritas*, New York 1942.

- Grintz, Yeoshua M., Hezekiah in Aggadah, in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Jerusalem 1971.
- Gurevich, Aron, *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception*, first published 1988, reprinted Cambridge University Press 1990.
- Halecki O., Problems with the New Monarchy; Jagello and Vitold, 1400–34, in *The Cambridge History of Poland from the Origins to Sobieski (to 1696)*, ed. by Wf. Reddaway, J. H. Penson, O. Halecki, & R. Dyboski, Cambridge University Press 1950.
- Halperin, Charles Jerome, The concept of the Russian land from the ninth to the fourteenth centuries, in *Russian History*, vol. 2, no 1, 1975.
- , *The Russian Land and the Russian Tsar. The Emergence of Muscovite Ideology, 1380–1408*, Berlin 1976.
- , *Russia and the Golden Horde. The Mongol Impact on Russian History*, London 1987.
- , Text and textology: Salmina's dating of the Chronicle tales about Dmitrii Donskoi, in *SEER*, vol. 79, no 2, 2001.
- Hansen, Mogens Herman, The battle exhortation in ancient historiography. Fact or fiction? in *Historia, Zeitschrift für alte Geschichte*, Band 42, Heft 2, 1993.
- Harvilahti, Lauri, *Bylinat. Venäläistä kertomaruoutta*, Pieksämäki 1985.
- Heffernan, Thomas J., *Sacred Biography. Saints and their Biographers in the Middle Ages*, New York 1988.
- Hosking, Geoffrey, *Russia, People and Empire 1552–1917*, Glasgow 1997.
- Huizinga, J., *The Waning of the Middle Ages. A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought and Art in France and the Netherlands in the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, first published 1924, London 1970.
- Hurwitz, Ellen S., *Prince Andrej Bogoljubskij: The Man and the Myth*. Studia historica et philologica XII, Sectio slavica 4, Firenze 1980.
- Ingham, Norman W., The martyred prince and the question of Slavic cultural continuity in the early middle ages. *Medieval Russian Culture*, ed. by Henrik Birnbaum & Michael S. Flier. California Slavic Studies XII, Berkeley 1984.
- , Genealogy and identity in the rhetoric of Muscovite rulership. *Culture and Identity in Muscovy, 1359–1584*, eds A. M. Kleimola & G. D. Lenhoff, Moscow 1997.
- Jussila, Osmo, Venäjän keisarikunnan historiankirjoitus, *Historiankirjoituksen historia*, Helsinki 1983.
- Kagan, M. D., Rukopisanie Magnusha, korolya Svejsskogo, in *SkikDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.), chast' 2*, Leningrad 1989.
- Kantorowich, E. H., *The King's Two Bodies*, Princeton 1957.
- Karamzin, N. M., *Istoriya Gosudarstva Rossiiskogo. Kniga I (Tomy I, II, III i IV)*, izdanie pyatoe, Sankt Peterburg 1842.
- Kazhdan, Alexander, Sol invictus, in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 3, New York 1991.
- Kazhdan, Alexander, & Shevchenko, Nancy P. George, in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 2, New York 1991.
- Khitrov, Mikhail, Svyatoy blagovernnyy velikiy knyaz' Aleksander Nevskiy in *Svyatoy i blagovernnyy velikiy knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy*, Moskva 1893, also printed in Zhizneopisaniya, fakty i gipotezy, portrety i dokumenty v 30 knigakh: Rossiyskie sudby, izd. K. V. Kresnov, Moskva 1998.
- Khoroshev, A. S., *Politicheskaya istoriya russkoy kanonizatsii (XI–XVI vv.)*, Moskva 1986.
- Kirpichnikov, A. N., Ledovoe poboishche 1242 g. (novoe osmyslenie), in *Voprosy istorii* 5, 1994.
- , Dve velikikh bitvy Aleksandra Nevskogo, in *Aleksandr Nevskiy i istoriya Rossii (Materialy nauchno-prakticheskoy konferentsii 26–28 sentyabrya 1995 goda)*, Novgorod 1995.
- , Aleksandr Nevskiy: Mezhdru zapadom i vostokom, in *Voprosy istorii*, no 11/12, 1996.
- Kirsch, J. P., St. Methodius of Olympus, in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. X, online edition 1999.

- Klaniczay, Gábor, *The Uses of Supernatural Power: The Transformation of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early-Modern Europe*, transl. by Susan Singerman, ed. Karen Margolis, Polity Press 1990.
- , The paradoxes of royal sainthood as illustrated by central European examples, in *Kings and Kingship in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Anne J. Duggan, King's College London medieval studies X, Exeter 1993.
- Kleimola, A. M., & Lenhoff, G. D., Preface, in *Culture and Identity in Muscovy, 1359–1584*, eds A. M. Kleimola & G. D. Lenhoff, Moscow 1997.
- Klepinin, N. A., *Svyatoy i blagovernyy velikiy knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy*, Moskva 1993.
- Klimov, P. Yu. Sv., Aleksandr Nevskiy v Russkoy tserkovno-monumental'noy zhivopisi vtoroy poloviny XIX–nachala XX vv. in *Aleksandr Nevskiy i istoriya Rossii (Materialy nauchno-prakticheskoy konferentsii 26–28 sentyabrya 1995 goda)*, Novgorod 1996.
- Kliychevskiy, V. O., *Drevnerusskie zhitiya svyatykh kak istoricheskiy istochnik*, Moskva 1871.
- , Kurs russkoy istorii 2. *Sochineniya v vos'mi tomakh*, 1871, Moskva 1957.
- Kloss, Boris. M., Letopis' Lavrentievskaya, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Letopis' Novgorodskaya pervaya, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Letopis' Nikonovskaya, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1989.
- , Letopisniy Litsevoy svod, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1989.
- , Determining the authorship of the Trinity Chronicle, in *Medieval Russian Culture, vol. II*, eds Michael S. Flier, Daniel Rowland, California slavic studies XIX, Berkeley 1994.
- Knape, Joachim, Historia, textuality and episteme in the Middle Ages, in *Historia. The Concept and Genres in the Middle Ages*, edited by Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen & Päivi Mehtonen, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 116, 2000.
- Kolesov, V. V., Povest' o ubienii Andrey a Bogolyubskogo, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- Kolotilova, S. I., K voprosu o polozhenii Pskova v sostave Novgorodskoi feodal'noi respubliky, in *Istoriya SSSR*, no 2, 1975.
- Koluchchi, M., Pervonachal'naya redaktsiya 'Zhitiya Aleksandra Nevskogo': zametki po istorii teksta, in *TODRL 50*, 1997.
- Korpela, Jukka, Konstantinuksen lahjakirja—Näkökulma keskiaikaiseen totuuteen, in *Historiallinen aikakauskirja no 1*, 1995.
- , Nestorin kronikka. Kertomus Muinais-Venäjältä, in *Kanava no 4*, 1995.
- , Vladimirin P. Jumalanäidin siunattu ryöstö 1155, in *Suomen kirkkohistoriallisen seuran vuosikirja 84–85*, 1995.
- , *Kiovan Rusj. Keskiajan eurooppalainen suurvalta*, Hämeenlinna 1996.
- , Moskova—mikä ihmeen kolmas Rooma?, in *Historiallinen aikakauskirja no 3*, 1998.
- Kostyukhin, E. A., Aleksandr Makedonskiy v literaturnoy i fol'klornoy traditsii, in *Issledovaniya po folkloru i mifologii vostoka*, Moskva 1972.
- Kozhin, A. N., *Literaturnyy yazyk Kievskoy Rusi*, Moskva 1981.
- Kuchkin, V. A., O date rozhdeniya Aleksandra Nevskogo, in *Voprosy istorii 2*, 1986.
- , Aleksandr Nevskiy—gosudarstvennyy deyatel' i polkovodets srednevekovoy Rusi, in *Aleksandr Nevskiy i istoriya Rossii. (Materialy nauchno-prakticheskoy konferentsii 26–28 sentyabrya 1995 goda)*, Novgorod 1996.
- Kuchkov, V., Letopisi, in *Literatura i kul'tura drevney Rusi: Slovar'-spravochnik*, pod. red. V. V. Kuchkova, Moskva 1994.
- Kuzmina, V. D., *Devgenievo deyanie*, Moskva 1962.
- Ladner, Gerhard B. *Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages; Selected Studies in History and Art, vol. I and II*, Storia e letteratura, Raccolta di studi e testi 155 and 156, Roma 1983.

- , Greatness in medieval histori, first printed in *The Catholic Historical Review* 50, 1964, also printed in *Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages; Selected Studies in History and Art, vol. I and II*, Storia e letteratura, Raccolta di studi e testi 155 and 156, Roma 1983.
- Langer, Lawrence N., The posadnichestvo of Pskov: Some aspects of urban administration in Medieval Russia, in *Slavic Review* 43, vol. 1, 1984.
- Le Goff, Jacques, *The Medieval Imagination*, University of Chicago Press 1985.
- , *Medieval Civilization 400–1500*, transl. by Julia Barrow, first published as *La civilization de l'Occident medieval*, Paris 1964, first published in English by Basil Blackwell 1988.
- Lehmijoki, Maiju, Hagiografiat keskiajan tutkimuksen lähteenä, in *Työkalut riviin. Näkökulmia yleisen historian tutkimusmenetelmiin*, ed. Eero Kuparinen. Turun yliopiston historian laitos, julkaisuja no. 43, Turku 1997.
- Lehmijoki-Gardner, Maiju, *Wordly Saints: Social Interaction of Dominican Penitent Women in Italy, 1200–1500*, SKS, Helsinki 1999.
- Lehtovirta, Jaakko, *Ivan IV as Emperor. The Imperial Theme in the Establishment of Muscovite Tsardom*, Turku 1999.
- Leitsch, Walter, Einige Beobachtungen zum politischen Weltbild Alexander Nevskijs, in *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*, no 25, 1978.
- Lenhoff, Gail, *The Martyred Princes Boris and Gleb: A Socio-Cultural Study of the Cult and the Texts*, UCLA Slavic Studies 19, Slavica Publishers 1989.
- , Unofficial veneration of the Daniilovichii in Muscovite Rus', in *Culture and Identity in Muscovy, 1359–1584*, eds A. M. Kleimola & G. D. Lenhoff, Moscow 1997.
- Leonid, archmandrite, *Skazanie o podvigakh i zhizni sv. blagovernogo knyazya Aleksandra Nevskogo*, Sankt Peterburg 1882.
- Levina, S. A., Letopis' Voskresenskaya, in *SkikDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.), chast' 2*, Leningrad 1989.
- Lewis, C. S., *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*. Collected by Walter Hooper. Cambridge University Press 1966.
- Liddell, H. G., & Scott, R., *A Greek-English Lexicon*. A new edition, eds H. S. Jones & R. McKenzie, Oxford 1953.
- Likhachev, D. S., *Russkie letopisi i ikh kul'turno-istoricheskoe znachenie*, Moskva 1947.
- , Galitskaya literaturnaya traditsiya v zhitiy Aleksandra Nevskogo, in *TODRL* 5, 1947.
- , *Poetika drevnerusskoy kul'tury*, Leningrad 1967.
- , Pervye sem'sot let russkoy literatury, in *'Izbornik.'* *Sbornik proizvedenii literatury drevney Rusi*, Moskva 1969.
- , Byzantium and the emergence of independent Russian literature, in *Literature and Western Civilization, vol. 2. The Medieval World*, general eds David Daiches & Anthony Thorlby, London 1973.
- , Russkaya kul'tura i srazhenie na Kulikovom pole, in *Zvezda*, no 3, 1980.
- , Rasskaz o prestuplenii Ryazanskih knyazey, in *PLDR XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
- , Povest o ryazorenii Ryazani Batyem, in *PLDR XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
- , Literatura tragicheskogo veka v istorii Rossii, in *PLDR XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
- , Literatura vremeni natsional'nogo pod'ema, in *PLDR XIV–seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
- , Literatura 'gosudarsvennogo ustroeniya' (seredina XVI vek), in *PLDR Seredina XVI veka*, Moskva 1985.
- , Daniil Zatochnik, in *SkikDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Slovo ob Aleksandre Nevskom, in *Knyaz' Aleksander Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.

- Likhacheva, O. P., Letopis' Ipat'evskaya, in *SkikDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Galitsko-Volynskaya letopis', in *PLDR, XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
- Lind, John H., Early Russian-Swedish Rivalry. The Battle on the Neva in 1240 and Birger Magnusson's Second Crusade to Tavastia, in *Scandinavian Journal of History*, vol. 16, no 4, 1991.
- , Bishop Thomas in recent historiography—Views and sources, in *Suomen varhais-historia, Tornion kongressi 14.–16.6.1991*. Studia historica septentrionalia 21, Rovaniemi 1992.
- , Mobilisation of the European periphery against the Mongols—Innocent IV's all-European policy in its Baltic context. Unpublished seminar presentation held in Visby, September 2001.
- , Consequences of the crusades in target areas, in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray, Ashgate 2001.
- Lindquist, Thomas, Crusades and crusading ideology in Sweden, in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray, Ashgate 2001.
- Lur'e, Ya. S., *Obshcherusskie letopisi XIV–XVI vv.*, Leningrad 1976.
- , Povest' o bitve na Lipitse, in *SkikDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Letopis' Sofiyskaya pervaya, in *SkikDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1989.
- , Letopis' Troitskaya, in *SkikDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1989.
- , Letopis' Tverskaya, in *SkikDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1989.
- , Letopis' Simeonovskaya, in *SkikDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1989.
- , Istoriya Rossii v letopisanii i v vospriyatii novogo vremeni, in *Rossiya drevnaya i Rossiya novaya*, Sankt Peterburg 1997.
- Luria, Jakov S., Fifteenth century chronicles as a source for the history of the formation of the Muscovite state, in *Medieval Russian Culture*, vol. II, eds Michael S. Flier & Daniel Rowland, California Slavic studies XIX, Berkeley 1994.
- MacCoull, Leslie S. B., Sol justitiae, in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 3, New York 1991.
- McKenzie, Steven L., *King David. A Biography*, Oxford University Press 2001.
- Magocsi, Paul Robert, *A History of Ukraine*, Seattle 1998.
- Makariy, *Istoriya russkoy tserkvi Makariya, episkopa Vinnichkago*, Tom 1–9, 1857–83.
- Mango, Cyril, Byzantinism and romantic Hellenism, in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28, London 1965, also printed in *Byzantium and its Image: History and Culture of the Byzantine Empire and its Heritage*, London 1984.
- Mansikka, V., *Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo, Razbor redaktsii i tekst'*. Sankt Peterburg 1913, reprinted Leipzig 1984.
- Martin, Janet, *Medieval Russia 980–1584*, Cambridge University Press, reprinted 1996.
- Matuzova, V. I., Rol' Teytonskogo ordena v osushchestvlenii planov proniknoveniya rimskoy kurii na Rus', in *Vostochnaya Evropa v drevnosti i srednevekov'e. Drevnyaya Rus' v sisteme etnopoliticheskikh i kul'turnykh svyazey*, Moskva 1994.
- Mavrogordato, John, Introduction, in *Digenes Akrites*, ed. with an introduction, translation and commentary by John Mavrogordato, first printed 1956, Oxford 1999.
- Mažeika, Rasa, When crusader and pagan agree: Conversion as a point of honour in the baptism of King Mindaugas of Lithuania (c. 1240–63), *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500*, ed. by Alan V. Murray, Aldershot 2001.
- Mil'kov, V. V., *Drevnerusskie apokrif'y*, Sankt Peterburg 1999.

- , *Osmyslenie istorii v drevney Rusi*, izdanie vtoroe, ispravlennoe i dopolnennoe, Sankt Peterburg 2000.
- Miller, David B., The coronation of Ivan IV of Moscow, in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas, Band 15, Heft 4*, 1967.
- , *The Velikie Minei Chetii and the Stepennaja Kniga of Metropolitan Makarii and the Origins of Russian National Consciousness*, *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*, Band 26, Berlin 1979.
- , The Cult of Saint Sergius of Radonezh, in *Slavic Review* 52, vol. 4, 1993.
- Milyutenko, N. I., Skazanie ob ubienii v Orde knyazya Mikhaïla Chernigovskogo i ego boyarina Feodora, in *Literatura drevney Rusi: Bibliograficheskiy slovar'*, pod. red. O. V. Tvorogova, Moskva 1996.
- Mitchell, Stephen A., The Middle Ages, in *A History of Swedish Literature*, vol. 3, ed. Lars G. Warne, University of Nebraska Press 1996.
- Moenning, Ulrich, Digenes = Alexander? The Relationship between Digenes Akrites and the Byzantine Alexander Romance in their Different Versions, in *Digenes Akrites. New Approaches to Byzantine Heroic Poetry*, ed. by Roderick Beaton & David Ricks, Cambridge 1993.
- Momarova, R. A., Svyatoy Georgiy v zhizni russkogo naroda, in *Russkaya rech'* no 6, 1993.
- Moussinac, Leon, *Sergei Eisenstein: An Investigation into his Films and Philosophy*, New York 1970.
- Munslow, Alun, *Deconstructing History*, London 1997.
- Murav'eva, L. L., *Letopisanie severo-vostochnoj Rusi XIII–XV veka*, Moskva 1983.
- Murray, Alan V., The structure, genre, and intended audience of the Livonian rhymed Chronicle, in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray, Ashgate 2001.
- Mäki-Petäys, Mari, Nomen est omen: Esimerkkejä Aleksanteri Nevskin pyhimyselämäkerran kielikuvista, in *Faravid* 22–23, 1999.
- , Border Heroism in the Life of Alexander Nevskiy, in *Etnichna istoriya narodiv Evropi: Zbirnik naukovih prats'*, Vypusk 5, Kiev 2000.
- , On the applicability of image research to the study of medieval hagiographies, in *Looking at the other: Historical study of images in theory and practice*, Acta universitatis ouluensis humaniora 42, Oulu 2002.
- , Eufrateelta Nevalle, Aleksanteri Suuren pohjoinen ulottuvuus, in *Antiquitas Borea—Antiikin kulttuurin pohjoinen ulottuvuus*, Acta universitatis ouluensis humaniora 48, Oulu 2002.
- Nasonov, A. N., Vvedenie, in *Pskovskie letopisi*, vyp. 1, Moskva 1941.
- , Predislovie, in *Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis' starshego i mladshego izvodov*, pod. red. i s predisloviem A. N. Nasonova, Moskva 1950.
- , Vvedenie, in *Pskovskie letopisi*, vyp. 2, Moskva 1955.
- Nelson, Janet L., The political ideas of Alfred of Wessex, in *Kings and Kingship in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Anne J. Duggan, King's College London medieval studies X, Exeter 1993.
- Niitemaa, Vilho, & Hovi, Kalervo, *Baltian historia*, toinen täydennetty painos, Helsinki 1991.
- Noonan, Thomas, Forging a national identity: Monetary politics during the reign of Vasil I (1389–1425), in *Culture and Identity in Muscovy, 1359–1584*, eds A. M. Kleimola & G. D. Lenhoff, Moscow 1997.
- Nordstrandh, Gisela, En kritisk läsning av Erikskrönikans första korstågsepisod, *Historisk tidskrift för Finland* 1990.
- Obolenskiy, Dimitri, *The Byzantine Commonwealth. Eastern Europe, 500–1453*, London 1971.
- Oded, Bustanay, Hezekiah, *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Jerusalem 1971.

- Okhotnikova, V. I., Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo, in *PLDR XIII vek*, Moskva 1981.
- , Povest' o zhitii Aleksandra Nevskogo, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Povest' o Dovmonte, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1989.
- , Letopisi Pskovskie, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1989.
- Olster, David, Byzantine apocalypse, in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 2, *Apocalypticism in Western History and Culture*, ed. by Bernard McGinn, New York 1999.
- Onasch, Konrad, *Ikonen*, Gütersloh 1961.
- Onasch, Konrad, & Schniepr, Annemarie, *Ikonit*, Weiling & Göös 1995.
- Ostrowski, Donald, *Muscovy and the Mongols. Cross-cultural Influences on the Steppe Frontier, 1304–1589*. Cambridge University Press 1998.
- Papadakis, Aristides, *The Christian East and the Rise of the Papacy. The Church 1071–1453 A.D.*, Crestwood 1994.
- Papadopoulos, Aristides, The Akritic hero: Socio-cultural status in the light of comparative data, in *Digenes Akrites. New Approaches to Byzantine Heroic Poetry*, ed. by Roderick Beaton & David Ricks, Cambridge 1993.
- Pashuto, Vladimir, *Vneshnaya politika drevney Rusi*, Moskva 1968.
- , Zlogor'kie gody, in *Illyustrirovannaya istoriya SSSR*, Moskva 1975.
- , *Aleksandr Nevskiy*, Moskva 1975/1995.
- Pautkin, A. A., O sudbe polkovodcheskikh zhizneopisaniy v drevnerusskoy literature XI–XIV vv. in *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta, Seriya 9, Filologiya*, no 3, 1988.
- Pokrovskiy, N. N., Afanasiy, in *SKiKDR (Pervaya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 1, Leningrad 1988.
- Poppe, Nicholas J. R., A note on Turkic lexical elements in the Slovo o polku Igoreve and the Zadoshchina, in *SEER*, vol. 79, no 2, 2001.
- Priselkov, M. D., *Istoriya russkogo letopisaniya XI–XV vv.*, Leningrad 1940.
- , *Troitskaya letopis'*, *Rekonstruktsiya teksta*, Moskva 1950.
- Prochazka, Helen Y., On concepts of patriotism, loyalty, and honour in the old Russian military accounts, in *SEER*, vol. 63, no 4, 1985.
- , Warrior idols or idle warriors? On the cult of Saints Boris and Gleb as reflected in the old Russian military accounts, in *SEER*, vol. 65, no 4, 1987.
- Prokhorov, G. M., Kodikologicheskii analiz Lavrent'evskoy letopisi, in *Vspomogatel'nye istoricheskie dissipliny*, t.4, Leningrad 1972.
- , Povest' o Batyevom nashestvii v Lavrent'evskoy letopisi, in *TODRL* 28, 1974.
- , Povest' o nashestvii Batyya, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- Pyatnov, P. V., Novgorodskaya literatura XIV–XV vv. in *Literatura i kul'tura drevney Rusi. Slovar'-pravotchnik*, pod. red. V. V. Kuskova, Moskva 1994.
- Ramm, B. Ia., *Papstvo i Rus' v X–XV vekakh*, Moskva 1959.
- Renault, Mary, *The Nature of Alexander*, London 1975.
- Roshko, G., Innokentiy IV i ugroza tataro-mongol'skogo nashestviya. Poslaniya Papy Rimskogo Daniily Galitskomu i Aleksandry Nevskomy, in *Simvol: Zhurnal khristianskoy kul'tury pri Slavyanskoy biblioteke v Parizhe*, no 20, 1988.
- Rowell, S. C., Between Lithuania and Rus': Dovmont-Timofey of Pskov, his life and cult, in *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, vol. XXV, Oxford 1992.
- , *Lithuania Ascending. A Pagan Empire within East-central Europe, 1295–1345*, first published 1994, Cambridge University Press 1997.
- Rozov, Nikolai, *Letopisnyy rasskaz o zhizni i voinskikh podvigakh velikogo knyazya Aleksandra Yaroslavicha v Litseom letopisnom svode XVI veka*, Sankt Peterburg 1990.
- Rudakov, V. N., 'Dukh yuzhny' i 'osmyy chas' v 'Skazanii o Mamaevom poboishche', in *Germenevtika drevnerusskoy literatury. Sb* 9, Moskva 1998.

- Ruotsala, Antti, *Europeans and Mongols in the Middle of the Thirteenth Century: Encountering the Other*. Annales academiae scientiarum Fennicae, Ser. Humaniora, tom. 314, Saarijärvi 2001.
- Ryding, William W., *Structure in Medieval Narrative*, Paris 1971.
- Salmina, M. A., 'Letopisnaya povest' o Kulikovskoi bitve' i 'Zadonshchina', in *Slovo o polku Igoreve i pamyatniki Kulikovskogo tsikla. K voprosu o vremeni napisaniya 'Slova'*, eds D. S. Likhachev, L. A. Dmitriev, Moskva 1966.
- , Slovo o zhitii i o prestavlenii velikogo knyazya Dmitriya Ivanovicha, in *TODRL* 25, 1970.
- , Eshche raz o datirovke 'Letopisnoi povesti' o Kulikovskoy bitve, in *TODRL* 32, 1977.
- , Letopisnaya povest' o Kulikovskoy bitve, in *PLDR XIV–seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
- , Povest' o nashestvii Tokhtamysha, in *PLDR XIV–seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
- , Slovo o zhitii velikogo knyazya Dmitriya Ivanovicha, in *PLDR XIV–seredina XV veka*, Moskva 1981.
- , 'Slovo o zhitii i o pestavlenii velikogo knyazya Dmitriya Ivanovicha, tsarya Russkogo'—pamyatnik XVI v. in *Problemy izucheniya kul'turnogo naslediya*, Moskva 1985.
- , Povest' o Kulikovskoy bitve letopisnaya, in *SkikDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.)*, chast' 2, Leningrad 1989.
- Schenk, Frithjof Benjamin, *Aleksandr Nevskiy: Heiliger – Fürst – Nationalheld. Eine Erinnerungsfigur im russischen kulturellen Gedächtnis 1263–2000*. Beiträge zur Geschichte Osteuropas, Band 36. Köln 2004.
- Selart, Antti, Aleksander Nevski: Märkmeid ühe püha suurvürsti postuumse karjääri kohta, in *Akadeemia*, vol. 12, no 1, 2000.
- , Confessional conflict and political co-operation: Livonia and Russia in the thirteenth century, in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray, Ashgate 2001.
- Serebryanskiy, N., *Drevne-russkiya knyazheskiya zhitiya. Obzor' redaktsii i teksty*, Moskva 1915.
- Serov, D. O., Steppennaya kniga, in *Literatura drevney Rusi: Bibliograficheskiy slovar'*, pod. red. O. V. Tvorogova, Moskva 1996.
- Shahan, Thomas J., Agapetus, in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. I, 1907, Online edition 1999.
- Shakhmatov, A. A., *Razyskaniya o drevneyshikh russkikh letopisnykh svodakh*, Sankt Peterburg 1908.
- , *Povest' vremennykh let*, T. 1, *Vvodnaya chast'*, *Tekst'*. Primechaniya, Petrograd 1916.
- Shaskol'skiy, I. P., *Bor'ba Rusi protiv krestonosnoy agressii na beregakh Baltiki v XII–XIII vv*, Leningrad 1978.
- Shevchenko, I., Constantinople Viewed from the Eastern Provinces in the Middle Byzantine Period. First published in *Harvard Ukrainian Studies III/IV, part 2*, Cambridge 1979–80, second printing in *Ideology, Letters and Culture in the Byzantine World*, Variorum Reprints, London 1982.
- Shishov, A. V., Polkovodtsheskoe iskusstvo knyazya Aleksandra Jaroslavicha v Nevskoy bitve, in *Knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red. Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- Shlyapkin, I. A., *Ikonografiya sv. Blagovernago velikago knyazya Aleksandra Nevskago*, Petrograd 1915.
- Siikala, Anna-Leena, *Tarina ja tulkinta: Tutkimus kansankertojista*, Mänttä 1984.
- Smirnova, Engelina, *Moscow Icons, 14th–17th Centuries*, Leningrad 1989.
- Sokolov, Yu. F., Aleksandr Nevskiy. Formirovanie lichnosti, in *Knyaz' Aleksandr Nevskiy i ego epokha. Issledovaniya i materialy*, pod. red. Yu. K. Begunova i A. N. Kirpichnikova, Sankt Peterburg 1995.
- Solov'ev, S. M., *Istoriya Rossii s drevneyshikh vremena*, Sankt Peterburg 1895.

- Speranskiy, M., *Devgenievo deyanie*, Petrograd 1922.
- Stroganovskiy ikonopisnyy litsevoy podlinnik kontsa XVI-nachala XVII stoletiya*, Moskva 1869.
- Stökl, Günther, Kanzler und Metropolit, in *Studien zur Geschichte Osteuropas. 3. Teil. Gedenkband für Heinrich Felix Schmid* = Wiener Archiv für Geschichte des Slawentums und Osteuropas 5, 1966.
- Suvanto, Seppo, Eerikinkronikka, in *Suomen historia, osa 2*, Espoo 1985.
- Syundberg, Kh. (Sundberg, Hagar), Zhizn' v Novgorode vo vremya shvedskoy okkupatsii 1611–1617, in *Novgorodskiy istoricheskiy sbornik 6 (16)*, Sankt Peterburg 1997.
- Syrkina, A. Ya., *Digenis Akrit*, Moskva 1960.
- Tatishchev, V. N., *Istoriya Rossiyskaya, Tom. 3*, Sankt Peterburg 1784, Moskva 1965.
- Terras, Victor, *A History of Russian Literature*, New Haven 1991.
- Thomson, Francis J., *The Reception of Byzantine Culture in Medieval Russia*, Ashgate Variorum 1999.
- Toporov, V. N., *Syatost' i svyatye v russkoy dukhovnoy kul'ture, Tom. 1, Pervyi vek khris'tianstvo na Rusi*, Moskva 1995.
- Tvorogov, O. V., Aleksandriya Khronograficheskaya, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Khronika Georgiya Amartola, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Khronika Ionna Malaly, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Kirill, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , 'Istoriya Iudeyskoy voyny' Iosifa Flaviya, in *SKiKDR (XI–pervaya polovina XIV v.)*, Leningrad 1987.
- , Khronograf Sofiyskiy, in *SKiKDR (Vtoraya polovina XIV–XVI v.), chast' 2*, Leningrad 1989.
- , Khronografy drevney Rusi, in *Voprosy Istorii no 1*, 1990.
- , *Drevnyaya Rus': sobytiya i lyudi*, Sankt-Peterburg 1994.
- , Skazanie o Drakule, in *Literatura drevney Rusi: Khrestomatiya*, sost. L. A. Dmitriev, pod. red. D. S. Likhacheva, Sankt Peterburg 1997.
- Uspenskiy, B. A., *Istoriya russkogo literaturnogo yazyka (XI–XVII vv.)*, München 1987.
- Vahtola, Jouko, Tuomas piispasta Birger-jaarlin—näkökulmia Suomen varhaiskeskijän kirkkopoliittiseen kehitykseen, in *Historiallinen aikakauskirja no 1*, 1984.
- , Finlands Kirchenpolitische Verbindungen im frühen und mittleren 13. Jahrhundert, in *JfGO no 32*, 1984.
- Vasenko, Pl. Gr., 'Kniga stepennaya tsarskogo rodosloviya' i eya znachenie v drevnerusskoy istoricheskoy pis'mennosti, *Chast' pervaya*, Sankt Peterburg 1904.
- Verdier, P., Apocalypse, in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, reprinted 1981.
- Vernadsky, George, *The Origins of Russia*, Oxford 1959.
- , *The Mongols and Russia*, New Haven 1966.
- , *Russian Historiography. A History*, Massachusetts 1978.
- Vilhelsdotter, Gisela, *Riddare, bonde och biskop. Studier kring tre fornsvenska dikter jämte två nyeditioner*. Acta universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm studies in history of literature 42, Stockholm 1999.
- Wagner, G. K., *Alte Russische Städte. Kunstdenkmäler in der Sowjetunion, ein Bildenbuch*, Leipzig 1980.
- Wallace-Hadrill, Andrew, The emperor and his virtue, in *Historia, Zeitschrift für alte Geschichte, Band 30, Heft 3*, 1981.
- Ward, Benedicta, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event 1000–1215*, London 1982.
- Ward, John O., The monastic hagiographic impulse c. 1000–1260. A reassessment, in *Historia. The Concept of Genres in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen & Päivi Mehtonen. Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum. Societas scientiarum Fennica, Tammisaari 2000.

- Yanin, V. L., Tserkov' Borisa i Gleba v Novgorodskom detinitse (O novgorodskom istotochnike 'Zhitija Aleksandra Nevskogo'), in *Kul'tura srednevekovoy Rusi*, Leningrad 1974.
- Zatko, James J., The union of Suzdal, 1222–1252, in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 8, 1957.
- Zenkovsky, Serge A., *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*. Penguin 1974.

INDEX OF NAMES

Excluding Aleksandr Yaroslavich (Nevskiy)

Note from the author:

There are so many styles of transliterating Russian to English, that some variance is inevitable: authors themselves cite their own names in non-standard ways. I have thus referred to authors in the style they themselves used in their books, even though in the case of some Greek and Slavic names this may mean a departure from transliterations commonly used in English books.

- Abraham, 97, 242, 242 n. 15, 252, 263, 270
- Acre, 68
- Adrianova-Perets, V. P., 52, 132
- Aelred, 49
- Afanasiy, metropolitan of Moscow, 25, 159, 324–26, 349
- Albert Saubeer, papal legate, 95
- Aleksandr I Romanov, tsar, 374
- Aleksandr II Romanov, tsar, 374
- Aleksandr III Romanov, tsar, 374
- Aleksandr Menshikov, 372
- Aleksandr Mikhailovich, prince of Tver, 204, 206, 220
- Aleksandr Peresvet, warrior monk, 260
- Aleksandr Pushkin, 375
- Aleksandra, wife of Aleksandr Nevskiy, 8, 208
- Aleksey, metropolitan of Moscow, 246–47, 273, 286
- Aleksey Alekseevich Romanov, 368
- Aleksey Mikhailovich Romanov, 363, 367–68
- Aleksiĭ II, patriarch of Moscow, 378
- Alexander Dumas, 359
- Alexander the Great, king of Macedonia, 34–36, 39–40, 43, 53, 103, 131, 243, 264, 291 n. 18, 380
- Alfred, king of England, 31, 31 n. 9
- Alta river, 62, 63, 63 n. 131
- Amalek, 55, 61–62, 265, 270
- Anastasiya Yureva-Zakharina (Romanova), 286
- Andreas von Sürland/von Felben, grand master of the Teutonic Order, 33, 33 n. 19
- Andreash, 32–33, 106, 196, 308, 366
- Andrey of Polotsk, alleged son of Lithuanian Grand Duke Olgerd/Algirdas, 263
- Andrey Aleksandrovich, 84–85, 121, 140–41, 143, 145, 204, 218, 237, 384
- Andrey Bogolyubskiy, great prince of Vladimir, 4–5, 31, 42, 59 n. 122, 128–29, 129 n. 107, 134, 138, 359, 366, 369
- Andrey Osl'yablya, warrior monk, 260
- Andrey Yaroslavich, 10, 74, 76, 93, 95–98, 100, 116–18, 121, 139, 141, 159, 173, 180–81, 192, 199, 221, 226–30, 236, 295, 317–18, 331–32, 339, 376
- Anna, daughter of Dmitriy Aleksandrovich, 209
- Anna, daughter of Duke Karl Friedrich, 373
- Antioch, 64–65, 267
- Antoniĭ, metropolitan of Moscow, 359, 366
- Antonova, V. I., 365, 365 n. 9, 368 n. 14, 371 n. 24
- Arkadiy, archbishop of Novorod, 5
- Arrian, 43
- Ascalon, 64
- Asser, bishop of Sherborne, 31, 31 n. 9
- Astrakhan, 280, 325, 345
- Augustus, Roman emperor, 97, 291, 291 n. 18, 321, 351
- Babylon, 289
- Bakota, 112
- Balaam, 354

- Balak, 354
 Baty, khan, 88–93, 95–96, 98, 105,
 115, 131, 159, 176, 180–81,
 189–90, 192, 196, 213, 225–27,
 235, 240, 244, 252, 259, 267,
 312–15, 318–19, 329, 333–36, 354,
 366
 Begitch, 256, 269
 Begunov, Yuriy K., 7 n. 16, 19,
 19 n. 58, 20–21, 23–24, 30,
 30 n. 4, 48, 79, 81–83, 83 n. 52,
 84–87, 108, 120, 122–23, 143–45,
 162–64, 166, 194, 194 n. 1, 195,
 202, 232–33, 301, 364–65, 367,
 368 n. 17, 376, 378, 383
 Bela, king of Hungary, 115–16
 Beletskiy, S. V., 72
 Belozero, 286, 295
 Benedict the Pole, 92
 Berke, khan, 139, 230
 Bernard of Clairvaux, 68–69
 Bertrand de Born, troubadour, 332–33
 Birger, jarl, 182–88, 308
 Birgitta, 188
 Black Sea, 275
 Bobrov, A. G., 183, 224, 370
 Bogatyrev, Sergei, viii, 330–331
 Bogolyubovo, 124
 Bonaventure, Franciscan monk, 15
 Boris Aleksandrovich, 223
 Boris and Gleb, first Russian saints,
 canonised in 1072, 54–57, 59,
 61–62, 63, 63 n. 131, 66, 76, 125,
 128, 139, 146, 191, 220, 225, 253,
 262, 264–66, 270, 271, 286, 310,
 359, 366, 369–71, 381, 384
 Boris Godunov, 345, 348–49, 355
 Boris Vasilkovich, 58–59, 230
 Boris Yeltsin, 378
 Borovsk, 285
 Bosley, Richard D., 232
 Braudel, 12
 Brothers of the Sword, 8, 8 n. 19, 68,
 70, 72
 Bryansk, 248, 263
 Burke, Kenneth, 49–50

 Cain and Abel, 55, 237
 Callisthenes, 35 n. 24
 Chechnya, 378
 Cherepnin, L. V., 110
 Cherniavsky, Michael, 129
 Chernigov, 4, 121 n. 76, 125, 213,
 314, 363
 Chrétien de Troye, 89
 Clermont, 64, 261
 Constantine the Great, Roman
 emperor, 264, 291–92, 298, 300,
 302, 358
 Constantine Monomakh, Byzantine
 emperor, 291, 371
 Constantinople, 121, 203, 239, 240,
 240 n. 7, 250, 267, 279 n. 117,
 291–92, 317
 Crummey, Robert, 377

 Dalmat, archbishop of Novgorod, 118,
 154
 Daniel, prophet, 289, 293
 Daniil, metropolitan of Moscow, 285,
 287 n. 6, 295, 318
 Daniil the Prisoner/ *Žatochnik*, 34,
 34 n. 21
 Daniil Aleksandrovich, prince of
 Moscow, 272
 Daniil Romanovich, prince of Galicia,
 48, 74, 74 n. 28, 92–94, 96–97,
 103, 105–109, 109 nn. 25–27,
 110–18, 120, 136, 227, 360, 383
 Danilevskiy, I. N., 251, 265
 Darius, king of Persia, 35, 37
 David, king of Israel, 41–44, 53, 56,
 61, 97, 133, 230, 264
 Devlet-Girey, khan, 358, 366
 Digenes Akrites, 19, 35–36, 38–39, 89,
 195, 380
 Dionisii, metropolitan of Moscow, 349
 Dmitriev, L. A., 257
 Dmitriy of Bryansk, alleged son of
 Lithuanian Grand Duke
 Olgerd/Algirdas, 263
 Dmitriy Aleksandrovich, great prince of
 Vladimir, 20, 67, 80–88, 123, 138,
 140–46, 202, 207–209, 211, 217–18,
 237, 341, 381–84
 Dmitriy Borisovich, 140
 Dmitriy Ivanovich (Donskoy), great
 prince of Moscow, 24, 152, 170,
 176, 182, 244, 245, 245 n. 23,
 246–49, 250–75, 277, 279, 283, 294,
 294 n. 26, 302–303, 312, 350, 366,
 371, 385–87
 Dmitriy Ivanovich, son of Tsar Ivan
 IV, 294, 356
 Dmitriy Konstantinovich, prince of
 Suzdal, 22, 245 n. 23
 Dmitriy Mikhailovich, 204
 Dnepr river, 112

- Don river, 245, 248–52, 258, 263,
265, 267, 272
- Dovmont/Daumantas/Timofey, prince
of Pskov, 23, 23 n. 71, 142, 146,
178, 182, 201, 202, 202 n. 24,
203–204, 207, 208, 208 n. 43,
209–11, 236, 256, 341, 347 n. 92,
382, 386
- Drochilo Nezdylov, Novgorodian
warrior, 167
- Dvina river, 209
- Dyad'kov, 112
- Dyuden, Mongol chieftain, 142–46,
384
- Ebbinghaus, Andreas, 289, 289 n. 14
- Edigey, emir, 171, 171 n. 56, 172,
275–77
- Einhard, monk, 146
- Elena Glinskaya, 295
- Epiphanius the Wise, 251, 274
- Euphrates river, 36, 37, 241
- Erik, duke, 184
- Erik, king of Sweden, 184
- Eudokia, great princess of Moscow,
wife of Dmitriy Ivanovich (Donskoy),
262
- Evfemiy II, archbishop of Novgorod,
183, 232, 370
- Evgeniy, bishop of Vladimir in
Volynia, 104
- Ezra, prophet, 293
- False Dmitriy, 349
- Fedotov, G. P., 98, 129, 225, 332
- Fennell, John L. I., 20 n. 58, 21, 50,
77, 94 n. 86, 99 n. 101, 100, 116,
118, 118 n. 62, 143, 216, 227–29,
270–71, 301
- Feodor, *igumen*, 286
- Feodor Alekseevich Romanov, 368
- Feodor Belskiy, 295
- Feodor Dostoevskiy, 375
- Feodor Ivanovich, great prince of
Moscow, tsar, 25, 342 n. 78, 345,
347–49, 355–60, 363, 365
- Feodor Yaronovich/Yakunovich, *boyar*
of Mikhail of Chernigov, 93, 211–12
- Feodosiy Klopskiy, archbishop of
Novgorod, 179, 214
- Feodosiya, daughter of Tsar Feodor,
348, 355–56, 360
- Feodosiya, mother of Aleksandr
Nevskiy, 7, 30, 336
- Feodosiya Igorevna, 7
- Ferrara, 292, 316–17, 370
- Filaret Nikitich, patriarch of Moscow,
363
- Filipp, metropolitan of Moscow, 349
- Filofei, monk, 293
- Flavius Claudius Julianus, Roman
emperor, 259
- Flavius Josephus, 18, 38, 39, 39 n. 42
- Florence, 279, 279 n. 117, 292,
316–17, 370
- Fredrik II, German emperor, 92
- Fuhrman, Joseph T., 102, 102 n. 111,
112 n. 39, 114, 114 nn. 48, 50, 52,
118, 118 n. 63, 120, 120 n. 72,
123 n. 90
- Galda and Gemont, papal legates
mentioned in the *Life* of Aleksandr,
97, 230
- Galicia, 4, 8, 20, 104–105, 110, 112,
120, 157
- Ganelon, Roland's step-father, 260
- Gaugamela, 43
- Gavriil Buzhinskiy, 373
- Gediminas, grand duke of Lithuania,
204, 206
- Gennadiy, archbishop of Novgorod,
293
- Georgios Amartolos, 99
- Gerasim, bishop, 250, 252
- Gideon, 241–43, 258–59, 264, 266–67,
306
- Gippius, A. A., 154, 154 nn. 5, 7,
9, 155, 166
- Gleb Svyatoslavich, 133
- Gleb Vasilkovich, 58–59, 175
- Gleb Vladimirovich, prince of Ryazan,
240
- Godunov, 356
- Gog and Magog, 46, 243
- Goldblatt, Harvey, 271
- Golden Horde, 10, 58, 67, 80, 90, 96,
99, 118, 123, 139–40, 193, 203,
206, 210, 212–13, 222, 230, 245,
255, 268, 270, 274–75, 278, 283,
307, 313, 331, 337, 385, 387
- Goliath, 306
- Golubinskiy, E., 205, 297
- Gomorrah, 371
- Gorodets, 124, 134, 230
- Grabmüller, Hans-Jürgen, 162, 176–78,
202
- Gregory IX, pope, 91, 92, 185

- Gustav Vasa, king of Sweden, 189
 Guyuk, khan, 95
 Gyuryata Pineshscinitch, Novgorodian warrior, 167
- Hagar, wife of Abraham, 242, 250–51, 253, 258, 267, 275, 279, 292, 352, 358, 360–61, 386
 Håkon Håkonsson, king of Norway, 95
 Halperin, Charles Jerome, 101
 Heffernan, Thomas J., 12–13
 Herman, bishop of Dorpat, 70–71
 Herman Balke, master of the Teutonic Order, 70
 Herman Voyata, monk, 157
 Hezekiah, king of Judah, 41, 44–48, 53, 90, 192, 207, 210–11, 267, 380–81
 Honorius III, pope, 91
 Huns, 243
 Hyacinth, Dominican monk, 91
- Iakov, bishop of Vladimir, 145–46, 384
 Igor Rurikovich, great prince of Kiev, 322
 Igor Svyatoslavich, 126, 239, 249, 254
 Il'ya, bishop of Novgorod, 126
 Ingham, Norman W., 271
 Ingria, 54, 372
 Ingvar Igorevich, 7
 Innocent IV, pope, 6, 92–94, 100, 117
 Ioan, bishop of Kholm, 104
 Ioan Dmitrievich, 208
 Ioannes Malala, 99
 Iona Dumin, metropolitan of Vladimir, 18, 25, 325–26, 347, 349–50, 352–61, 365, 367, 371, 388
 Iosaf Skrypitsyn, metropolitan of Moscow, 295
 Iosif, metropolitan of Kiev, 115
 Iov, patriarch of Moscow, 347–50, 355, 358
 Irina, wife of Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich Romanov, 368
 Irina, wife of Tsar Feodor, 348, 355–56, 368
 Isaac, son of Sara and Abraham, 242
 Isaac Massa, 295
 Isaiah, prophet, 30, 41, 44, 96, 128–30, 144, 207, 230, 235
- Ishmael, son of Hagar and Abraham, 238, 242–43, 251, 253–54, 256, 275, 279, 296, 359, 386
 Isidore of Sevilla, 131
 Issos, 43
 Ivan I Daniilovich Kalita, great prince of Moscow, 206, 367
 Ivan II Ivanovich, great prince of Moscow, 246
 Ivan III Vasil'evich, great prince of Moscow, 287, 290, 292, 294, n. 26, 325
 Ivan IV Vasil'evich, great prince of Moscow, tsar, 24–26, 177 n. 80, 272, 280, 284–86, 288, 290, 294–96, 298, 305, 305 n. 59, 306–307, 311–12, 315, 318, 322, 324–28, 330–33, 340–41, 342, 342 n. 78, 343–51, 355, 358–59, 363, 371, 376–77, 387
 Ivan Shuiskiy, 295
 Ivangorod, 357–58
 Izborsk, 9, 70–71, 75
 Izhora river, 1, 44–45, 54, 161, 373
 Izyaslav Yaroslavich, 134
- Jagiello/Jagailo, grand duke of Lithuania, 257, 274
 Japheth, Noah's son, 249
 Jeotapata, 38
 Jeremiah, patriarch of Constantinople, 268, 348
 Jerusalem, 39, 44–46, 64, 68, 90, 190, 207, 210, 239, 240 n. 7, 267, 290, 371, 380–81
 John, apostle, 242, 302
 John, brother of Richard the Lionheart, 332
 John III, king of Sweden, 356
 John Komnenos, Byzantine emperor, 65
 John Plano de Carpini, Franciscan monk, 92
 Joinville, 136, 136 nn. 137–38
 Joseph, 30, 34, 38, 46, 133, 190, 195, 308
 Joseph Sanin, *igumen*, 287
 Joshua, son of Nun, 62, 64, 156
 Judas Maccabeus, 69
- Kagan, M. D., 188
 Kalka river, 91, 176, 240–41, 244, 258, 333

- Karakorum, 92–93, 95, 95 n. 88, 96
 Karamzin Nikolay Milkhaïlovich, 171, 185, 275, 375–76, 388
 Karelia, 165–66, 185–88, 357
 Karl Friedrich, duke of Holstein-Gottorp, 373
 Kavgadyy, Mongol chieftain, 219–20
 Kayala river, 249
 Kazan, 280, 296, 305 n. 59, 306–307, 325–26, 330, 345, 350, 371, 387
 Kazy-Girey, khan, 359
 Keksholm, 186
 Khoroshev, A. S., 57, 301 n. 45, 302
 Kiev, 3, 3 n. 4, 4, 5, 8, 25, 51 n. 96, 63, 66, 91–92, 96, 98, 111, 114–16, 120, 121, 121 n. 76, 122, 134, 136 n. 139, 137, 192, 205, 238–39, 241 n. 13, 242, 246–47, 257, 263, 272, 286, 291, 291 n. 18, 292, 300, 302, 321, 332, 347, 354, 371, 387
 Kiprian, metropolitan of Moscow, 172–74, 247, 250, 257, 260, 262, 271–72, 275, 364
 Kirill, bishop of Rostov, 58, 90, 117–19
 Kirill, metropolitan of Kiev, 20–21, 57, 99, 102, 111–13, 114, 114 n. 47, 115–20, 121, 121 nn. 75–76, 87, 122–24, 127, 132, 140, 144–45, 168, 212, 231, 298, 315, 349, 383
 Kirill, monk of Belozero, 286
 Kirill, scribe of prince Daniil of Galicia, 112–13, 116
 Kloss, Boris M., 154 n. 7, 172 n. 61, 251
 Klyuchevskiy, V. O., 16, 17, 17 n. 46, 299 n. 38
 Kolomna, 252, 262
 Koluchchi, M., 18 n. 53, 81, 82
 Konchak, *Polovets* warrior, 7
 Konchaka, sister of Khan Uzbek, 218
 Konrad, duke of Mazovia, 68
 Konstantin Borisovich, 140
 Konstantin Dmitrievich, prince of Pskov, 248
 Konstantin Lugotinich, Novgorodian warrior, 167
 Konstantin Mikhailovich, 219
 Konstantin Vsevolodovich, prince of Rostov, 31, 229
 Konstantin Yaroslavich, 121
 Kopor'ë, 9, 71, 73, 141, 143–44, 339, 357–58
 Korpela, Jukka, vii, 289
 Kotlov, 360
 Kuchkin, V. A., 7, 40
 Kulikovo Field, 247, 255–56, 258, 261, 264–65, 268, 271, 275, 279, 386
 Kurbskiy, A. M., 342
 Kuz'mina, V. D., 36 n. 31, 37
 Ladoga, 161, 165–67
 Ladoga lake, 165–66, 186
 Landskrona, 186
 Lavrentiy, monk, 22–23, 146, 157–58, 170, 173, 175, 216, 301, 384
 Lehtovirta, Jaakko, 290
 Leitsch, Walter, 101
 Lenhoff, Gail, 55, 272
 Leonid, Archmandrite, 18, 18 n. 54, 19
 Lev Danilovich, 109 nn. 26–27, 110, 115
 Likhachev, Dmitriy S., 17, 20, 21, 104–14, 117, 117 n. 60, 120, 122, 302, 377, 383
 Likhacheva, O. P., 104, 112
 Lind, John, viii, 2 n. 2, 9 n. 20, 33 n. 18, 95, 161, 161 nn. 26–27, 162, 162 n. 31, 163–66, 185–86
 Lindkvist, Thomas, 187
 Lipitsa river, 7
 Louis the Pious, 146
 Louis IX, king of France, 136
 Lublin, 342
 Luke, apostle, 261, 263
 Magnus Birgersson, 184
 Magnus Eriksson, king of Sweden, 163, 184, 187–91
 Makariy, churchhistorian, 25, 286, 289, 295
 Makariy, metropolitan of Moscow, 24–25, 195, 214, 271, 285–89, 294–96, 298–99, 306–307, 315–18, 320, 322–24, 349–51, 370, 386
 Maksim, metropolitan of Vladimir, 121–22
 Mamai, khan, 244–45, 250–61, 265–66, 268–69, 271, 275, 277, 303, 350, 386
 Mangu Temir, 140
 Mansikka, Vilho, 18–19, 24, 84, 86, 108, 194, 194 n. 1, 195, 232–34, 326, 347, 350–51, 360

- Manuel II, patriarch of Constantinople, 116
- Maria, daughter of Gediminas and wife of Dmitriy Milkhailovich, 204
- Marya, daughter of Dmitriy Aleksandrovich, 209
- Marya, princess of Rostov, 58–59, 213
- Mesopotamia, 241
- Methodius, bishop of Patara, 54, 240–41
- Mikhail, monk from the Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Vladimir, 25, 299
- Mikhail Feodorovich Romanov, tsar, 363
- Mikhail Vsevolodovich, prince of Chernigov, 8, 58, 93, 152, 175, 182, 192, 213–15, 219, 233, 268, 287, 313–15, 319, 327–29, 333, 336, 375, 385, 387
- Mikhail Yaroslavich, prince of Tver, 99 n. 99, 143, 152, 204, 206, 215–21, 277, 286, 314
- Miller, David B., 25, 257, 273–74, 289, 294, 299 n. 38, 315–16, 322 n. 7
- Mindaugas, king of Lithuania, 33 n. 19, 110, 162, 202, 202 n. 24, 203, 207, 208, 208 n. 43, 235–36, 277
- Miropovna river, 207
- Misha, warrior in the Battle of Neva, 199
- Mitrofan, bishop of Vladimir, 353
- Mneva, N. E., 365, 365 n. 9, 368 n. 14, 371 n. 24
- Moscow, viii, 3–4, 17 n. 46, 18, 24–26, 36 n. 30, 100, 143, 170–78, 183, 188, 203–206, 210, 215, 218–20, 223–24, 232, 236, 245, 245 n. 23, 246–47, 250–52, 255–57, 259, 261–62, 266, 269, 270–75, 277–78, 279, 279 n. 117, 280, 283–92, 293, 293 n. 24, 294–97, 299 n. 40, 304–306, 311, 315–18, 320–24, 327–28, 330, 330 n. 39, 331–32, 340–42, 343, 343 n. 78, 344, 346, 346 n. 88, 347, 347 n. 92, 348, 350, 354–61, 363–64, 366–68, 370–72, 374–75, 377–78, 384–88
- Moses, 55, 61–62, 252–53, 258, 265, 300
- Mstislav Danilovich, 104
- Mstislav Mstislavich, 7, 7 n. 16
- Mstislav Rostislavich the Brave/*Khrabryy*, 125, 126 n. 96
- Mstislav Vladimirovich, 133
- Murav'eva, L. L., 216
- Murmansk, 308
- Murom, 286
- Namest, Novgorodian warrior, 167
- Nasonov, A. N., 162, 176–77, 177 n. 80, 346 n. 88
- Neva river, 1, 9, 29, 33, 42, 45, 53, 54 n. 102, 57, 59–60, 67, 86, 100, 161, 166, 183, 184 n. 103, 185–87, 198, 234, 263, 328, 334, 373, 380
- Nevruiy, Mongol chieftain, 96, 180–81, 192, 210–11, 221, 226–28, 230, 234–35, 317–19, 331
- Nicea, 116–17
- Nikifor Simeonov, 172
- Nikolai I Romanov, tsar, 376
- Nil Sorskiy, 287
- Nizhniy Novgorod, 173, 212, 230, 245, 245 n. 23, 246 n. 23
- Noah, 238, 249
- Nogais clan, 142
- Novgorod, viii, 1, 3–10, 21–22, 25, 38, 42, 46, 57, 57 n. 113, 58–61, 66–68, 71–79, 81–84, 86, 86 n. 60, 87–88, 95, 95 n. 88, 96, 102, 118, 122, 126, 126 n. 96, 139–42, 146, 153, 154, 154 n. 7, 156, 160–70, 173, 174, 174 n. 69, 176, 177, 177 n. 80, 178, 181–82, 187–93, 195–96, 198–99, 200–202, 204–205, 208, 215, 217, 219, 222–24, 227–28, 230–32, 236, 241 n. 13, 245–46, 248, 267–68, 285–86, 288–89, 292–95, 300, 301, 301 n. 45, 308–11, 318, 322, 328, 334–35, 337–41, 343, 344, 344 n. 80, 345–46, 353, 353 n. 116, 354, 361, 368–70, 378, 381–82, 384, 388
- Nystad, 372, 373
- Obolensky, Dimitri, 290, 290 n. 17
- Ögedei, khan, 257
- Okhotnikova, V. I., 18 n. 53, 20, 23, 79, 201, 201 n. 20, 202, 202 n. 22, 206, 233–34, 299 n. 40, 346 n. 88
- Oleg Ivanovich, prince of Ryazan, 228, 252, 254–55, 260, 262
- Olga, great princess of Kiev, 31–32, 125, 287, 292, 322, 328

- Olgerd/Algirdas, grand duke of
Lithuania, 246, 257, 260, 262–63,
277–78
- Oliver, comrade of Roland, 261
- Orlov, A. S., 103
- Ostrowski, Donald, 316–18
- Pakhomi Logofet, monk, 214, 274
- Paraskeva, wife of Tsar Ivan IV, 364
- Pashuto, Vladimir, 7, 94 n. 86, 100,
112
- Pelgusiy, Ingrian chieftain, 54, 55, 167,
191, 264, 366
- Pereyasavl' Zalesskiy, 7, 60, 120, 121,
121 n. 75, 140–43, 228, 309,
324–25, 338
- Persia, 289
- Peter, metropolitan of Moscow, 262,
270, 286, 323, 367
- Peter, hermit, 64
- Peter I the Great, tsar, 128, 359, 363,
369 n. 18, 372–74, 377, 388
- Peter von Dusburg, 69
- Peypus, lake, 1, 10, 21, 55, 61, 63–65,
76, 100, 192, 199–200, 207, 270,
309–10, 339
- Philotheus, patriarch of Constantinople,
247, 273, 292
- Pimen, archbishop of Novgorod, 343,
345
- Polotsk, 8, 82, 160, 199, 208, 236, 263
- Poltava, 372
- Polybios, 43
- Priselkov, M. D., 112–14, 171–72,
172 n. 61, 216
- Prochazka, Helen Y., 55
- Pseudo-Callisthenes, 18, 35, 35 n. 24,
40 n. 49
- Pseudo-Methodius, 241–42, 243, 243
n. 16, 254, 278, 289
- Pskov, viii, 1, 8–9, 19, 21, 23,
23 n. 71, 56, 60, 61, 61 n. 127,
67–70, 71, 71 n. 15, 72, 72 n. 20,
73–80, 84–86, 88, 94, 102, 106,
108, 122, 142–44, 146, 162, 168,
175–78, 181–82, 189–92, 199, 200,
200 n. 14, 201–203, 204, 204 n. 29,
205–10, 217, 223, 228, 230–31,
235–36, 245–46, 248, 256, 285–86,
293–94, 300, 307, 309–11, 324,
328, 339, 340 n. 73, 341, 343, 343
n. 78, 344, 344 n. 80, 345, 346,
346 n. 88, 361, 369, 378, 381–82,
384, 386–88
- Qipchaq khanate, 316–17
- Queen of Sheba, 32, 106, 308
- Quintus Curtius Rufus, 43
- Rabsake, messenger of Sennacherib, 44
- Rakovor, 86, 155, 201, 207, 207
n. 38, 209
- Ramm, B. Ya., 94 n. 86, 97 n. 95,
100
- Richard the Lionheart, king of
England, 65, 136, 136 n. 136,
138, 332
- Riga, 9, 72 n. 20
- Roland, 260–61
- Roman Mstislavich, prince of Galicia,
106, 108, 136
- Rome, 40, 65 n. 139, 79, 91, 93, 97,
102, 120, 197, 240 n. 7, 280,
289–92, 293, 293 n. 24, 302, 304,
343 n. 78, 357, 371
- Rostislava, daughter of Mstislav
Mstislavich, 7, 7 n. 16
- Rostov, viii, 57–59, 86 n. 60, 118–19,
121 n. 76, 140, 142, 175–76,
213–14, 217, 230, 273, 312, 347
n. 92, 348–49, 359, 359 n. 135
- Rudakov, V. N., 265
- Ryazan, 6–7, 156, 158, 170, 173, 228,
240, 241 n. 13, 244, 248, 252, 254,
260, 262, 269, 279 n. 117, 352
- Ryurik, 3, 4, 25, 291 n. 18, 321, 323
- Salmina, M. A., 251
- Samson, 31, 34, 38, 39, 195, 308
- Samuel, prophet, 44, 133, 133 n. 127
- Sara, wife of Abraham, 242–43
- Saray, 99, 140
- Sartak, khan, 227, 317, 331, 366
- Satyreva, D. N., 72
- Saul, king of Israel, 159
- Saule, 8, 70
- Savva, *igumen*, 154
- Savva, warrior in the battle of Neva,
39, 199
- Sbyslav Yakunovich, 199
- Schenk, Frithjof Benjamin, 22 n. 64a
- Sennacherib, king of Assyria, 44–48,
90, 99 n. 99, 210
- Serebryanskiy, N., 18–19, 23, 44, 50,
57, 86, 164, 194 n. 1, 195–98,
233
- Sergey Eisenstein, 337, 376
- Sergey of Radonezh, *igumen*, 260–62,
266, 273–74, 284, 286

- Sevastyanyan, cellarer, 87, 111, 119, 298
 Shakhmatov, Aleksey A., 171, 222, 223 n. 76
 Shaskol'skiy, I. P., 161
 Shem, Noah's son, 249
 Shishov, A. V., 47–48
 Shlyapkin, I. A., 365, 368, 368 n. 17, 369 n. 18
 Siberia, 285
 Sigismund Vasa, king of Sweden and Poland, 356
 Simon Ushakov, 367
 Sit river, 8, 58, 156
 Smolensk, 4–5, 7, 9, 72, 78, 80, 125, 223
 Sofoni of Ryazan, 248
 Solomon, 31–32, 34, 38, 42, 44–45, 53, 97, 106, 110, 131, 195, 278, 308, 357
 Solov'ev, S. M., 212
 Sophia, daughter of Grand Duke Vivovt, 275
 Sophia Paleologus, 290, 292
 Spiridon, archbishop of Novgorod, 43, 154, 163, 198, 309
 Spiridon, Swedish chieftain, 163, 191
 Spiridon-Savva, metropolitan of Moscow, 291, 291 n. 19
 Stalin, 376–77
 Staritsa, 348
 Stephen Bathory, 342 n. 78, 343 n. 78, 356
 St Petersburg, 1, 363, 372–73, 378, 388
 Suetonius, 146
 Suzdal, viii, 4, 6, 22, 25, 72–76, 78–79, 91–94, 96, 116, 118–19, 121 n. 76, 122, 124, 137, 139, 141, 144, 169, 173, 181–82, 198–200, 205, 211–12, 227–31, 235, 309, 313, 317, 331, 369–70
 Svidrigailo, 276–77
 Svyatopolk “the Cursed”, 55–56, 62–63, 240, 252–53, 260, 263, 266
 Svyatoslav Igor'evich, 111
 Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich, 95, 227–29
 Sylvester, pope, 292
 Sylvester, priest, 324, 327
 Tamerlane, khan, 261
 Tatishchev, V. N., 122 n. 83, 375
 Tavastia, 185–86, 200
 Teutonic Knights, 1, 6, 8–10, 68, 68 n. 4, 70–72, 75, 80, 93–94, 201–203, 207–208, 366, 373, 377, 380, 382
 Thucydides, 43
 Timofey, verger, 154–55, 157
 Tokhtamysh, khan, 245 n. 23, 251, 255
 Torgils Knutsson, marshal, 186
 Toropets, 8
 Tovtavil, prince of Polotsk, 82
 Treniota/Traidenis, 203, 208 n. 43
 Turpin, archbishop, 261
 Tver, 86, 88, 99 n. 99, 142–43, 152, 159, 170–71, 173, 176, 203–204, 206, 206 n. 36, 210, 215, 216, 216 n. 60, 217–20, 222–23, 226–29, 245–46, 275, 277, 283, 286, 291 n. 19, 314, 327, 347 n. 92, 383
 Tverdilo Ivankovich, *posadnik* of Pskov, 9
 Ulf Fase, jarl, 185
 Uzbek, khan, 203, 218–19
 Valdemar Birgersson, 184
 Vasenko, P. G., 324, 324 n. 16, 325–26
 Vasilii II Vasil'evich, great prince of Moscow, 223, 245 n. 23, 273–74
 Vasilii Aleksandrovich, 168, 340
 Vasilii I Dmitrievich, great prince of Moscow, 245 n. 23, 270, 274–76
 Vasilii III Ivanovich, great prince of Moscow, 318, 323, 326, 344, 344 n. 30
 Vasilii Yaroslavich, 140
 Vasilii-Varlaam, 18, 25, 305, 307–15, 319, 324, 324 n. 16, 327–29, 331, 338–39, 361–62, 387
 Vasilko Konstantinovich, prince of Rostov, 58–59, 158
 Vasilko Romanovich, 104, 106, 112, 115
 Velikaya Perm, 349
 Vernadsky, George, 101, 301 n. 45
 Vespasian, Roman emperor, 38–39, 308
 Viborg, 186
 Vienna, 92
 Vilhelmsdotter, Gisela, 184 n. 103, 185, 185 n. 111, 186
 Vitovt/Vytautas, grand duke of Lithuania, 274–76

- Vladimir (in Volynia), 104, 121
 Vladimir (on the River Klyazma), 2,
 4–6, 8–9, 20, 23, 40, 42, 53, 58–59,
 72, 78, 87, 90–91, 96–97, 104–105,
 117, 119–23, 125, 128, 139–40,
 142–43, 145–46, 156–57, 160,
 168–70, 175–76, 193, 218, 220–21,
 227–29, 271–72, 276, 304, 310, 312,
 320–22, 325, 331, 333, 349–50,
 352–53, 359–61, 363, 365–68, 372,
 381–84, 386–88
 Vladimir Andreyevich, 248, 252,
 261–63
 Vladimir Svyatoslavich, great prince of
 Kiev, later St Vladimir, 25, 132,
 191, 253, 292, 298, 300–302, 308,
 321–23, 328, 340, 355, 358, 371
 Vladimir Vasilkovich, 104, 110, 126,
 133
 Vladimir Vsevolodovich Monomakh,
 great prince of Kiev, 4, 34 n. 21,
 108, 132, 136, 136 n. 139, 137,
 291, 291 n. 19, 371
 Voishelg, alleged son of Mindaugas,
 235–36
 Volga river, 90, 92, 136
 Vologda, 256–57, 349
 Volynia, 4, 8, 104, 110, 114, 116, 120
 Vozha river, 256, 269–70
 Vsevolod III Yur'evich, great prince of
 Vladimir, 4, 22, 31, 34 n. 21, 40,
 59 n. 122, 72, 111, 136 n. 139,
 137–38, 231, 309, 359, 366
 Vsevolod Mstislavich/Vsevolod-Gavriil,
 prince of Pskov, 204–205, 205 n. 34,
 286, 309–10, 328, 340 n. 73, 345,
 382
 Walter Daniel, 49
 William of Modena, 91
 Yakov, warrior in the Battle of Neva,
 199
 Yanin, V. L., 57, 57 n. 113
 Yaroslav Vladimirovich, great prince of
 Kiev, 55–56, 62–63, 66, 139, 238,
 253, 266, 270, 381
 Yaroslav Vladimirovich/King Gerpolt,
 71–73
 Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, great prince of
 Vladimir, 7–8, 22, 30, 56, 71–72,
 74, 92–93, 95–96, 105, 111,
 159–60, 166, 211–12, 217, 224–25,
 227, 229–30, 234–35, 309, 328–29,
 333–36, 339, 351, 353, 359, 366,
 387
 Yaroslav Yaroslavich, prince of Tver,
 81–83, 85–88, 139–40, 159, 204,
 215–17, 227–29, 235, 340, 383
 Yaroslavl, 82, 347 n. 92, 349
 Yur'ev/Tartu/Dorpat, 67, 70,
 71 n. 15, 75, 81–82, 83, 83 n. 52,
 84–87, 123, 126 n. 96, 143–44,
 154, 154 n. 7, 155, 194, 207,
 217–18, 340, 340 n. 73, 341–42,
 383
 Yuriy Danilovich, great prince of
 Moscow, 204, 206, 218–21
 Yuriy Dolgorukiy, great prince of
 Kiev, 4
 Yuriy Vsevolodovich, great prince
 of Vladimir, 7–8, 58–59, 91, 156,
 158, 229, 329, 352, 354, 359, 366
 Zatkan, James J., 91, 93, 94 n. 86,
 96
 Zenkovsky, Serge A., 50
 Zosima, heretic, 82
 Zosima, metropolitan of Moscow,
 292

THE NORTHERN WORLD

NORTH EUROPE AND THE BALTIC C. 400-1700 AD
PEOPLES, ECONOMIES AND CULTURES

Editors

BARBARA CRAWFORD (St. Andrews)

DAVID KIRBY (London)

JON-VIDAR SIGURDSSON (Oslo)

INGVILD ØYE (Bergen)

RICHARD W. UNGER (Vancouver)

PRZEMYSŁAW URBANCZYK (Warsaw)

ISSN: 1569-1462

This series provides an opportunity for the publication of scholarly studies concerning the culture, economy and society of northern lands from the early medieval to the early modern period. The aims and scope are broad and scholarly contributions on a wide range of disciplines are included: all historical subjects, every branch of archaeology, saga studies, language topics including place-names, art history and architecture, sculpture and numismatics.

1. Schutz, H. *Tools, Weapons and Ornaments*. Germanic Material Culture in Pre-Carolingian Central Europe, 400-750. 2002. ISBN 90 04 12298 2
2. Biggs, D., S.D. Michalove and A. Compton Reeves (eds.). *Traditions and Transformations in late Medieval England*. 2002. ISBN 90 04 12341 5
3. Tielhof, M. van. *The 'Mother of all Trades'*. The Baltic Grain Trade in Amsterdam from the Late 16th to the Early 19th Century. 2002. ISBN 90 04 12546 9
4. Looijenga, T. *Texts & Contexts of the Oldest Runic Inscriptions*. 2003. ISBN 90 04 12396 2
5. Grosjean, A. *An Unofficial Alliance*. Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654. 2003. ISBN 90 04 13241 4
6. Tanner, H.J. *Families, Friends and Allies*. Boulogne and Politics in Northern France and England, c. 879-1160. 2004. ISBN 90 04 13243 0
7. Finlay, A. *Fagrskinna, A Catalogue of the Kings of Norway*. A Translation with Introduction and Notes. 2004. ISBN 90 04 13172 8
8. Biggs, D.L., S.D. Michalove and A. Compton Reeves (eds.). *Reputation and Representation in Fifteenth-Century Europe*. 2004. ISBN 90 04 13613 4
9. Etting, V. *Queen Margrete I (1353-1412) and the Founding of the Nordic Union*. 2004. ISBN 90 04 13652 5
10. Lockhart, P.D. *Frederik II and the Protestant Cause*. Denmark's Role in the Wars of Religion, 1559-1596. 2004. ISBN 90 04 13790 4
11. Williams, G. and P. Bibire. *Sagas, Saints and Settlements*. 2004. ISBN 90 04 13807 2

12. Duczko, W. *Viking Rus. Studies on the Presence of Scandinavians in Eastern Europe*. 2004. ISBN 90 04 13874 9
13. Kotilaine, J.T. *Russia's Foreign Trade and Economic Expansion in the Seventeenth Century*. Windows on the World. 2005. ISBN 90 04 13896 X
14. Harreld, D.J. *High Germans in the Low Countries*. German Merchants and Commerce in Golden Age Antwerp. 2004. ISBN 90 04 14104 9
15. Blomkvist, N. *The Discovery of the Baltic*. The Reception of a Catholic World-system in the European North (AD 1075-1225). 2005. ISBN 90 04 14122 7
16. Oram, R.D. (ed.). *The Reign of Alexander II, 1214-49*. 2005. ISBN 90 04 14206 1
17. Boulhosa, P.P. *Icelanders and the Kings of Norway*. Medieval Sagas and Legal Texts. 2005. ISBN 90 04 14516 8
18. Murdoch, S. *Network North*. Scottish Kin, Commercial and Covert Associations in Northern Europe, 1603-1746. 2006. ISBN 90 04 14664 4
19. Cook, B. and G. Williams (eds.). *Coinage and History in the North Sea World, c. AD 500-1250*. Essays in Honour of Marion Archibald. 2006. ISBN 90 04 14777 2
20. Cathcart, A. *Kinship and Clientage*. Highland Clanship 1451-1609. 2006. ISBN-13: 978 90 04 15045 4, ISBN-10: 90 04 15045 5
21. Isoaho, M. *The Image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in Medieval Russia*. Warrior and Saint. 2006. ISBN-13: 978 90 04 15101 7, ISBN-10: 90 04 15101 X
22. Te Brake, W. and W. Klooster (eds.). *Power and the City in the Netherlandic World*. 2006. ISBN-13: 978 90 04 15129 1, ISBN-10: 90 04 15129 X
23. Stewart, L.A.M. *Urban Politics and the British Civil Wars*. Edinburgh, 1617-53. 2006. ISBN-13: 978 90 04 15167 3, ISBN-10: 90 04 15167 2